VEDANTA
THE SCIENCE OF LIFE



A treatise on the Science of Life based on the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavad Geeta* and the important *Prakarana Granthas* of *Acharya* Sankara by SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA.

Compiled and edited from the commentaries on the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavad Geeta* and the important *Prakarana Granthas* of *Acharya* Sankara as well as from the original published works on *Vedanta* by SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA

Compiled & Edited by
K. V. K. Thampuran

VEDANTA
THE SCIENCE OF LIFE

By

Swami Chinmayananda

PART ONE

UNDERSTANDING HUMAN NATURE



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Part One

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IN DEDICATION

अज्ञानतिमिरान्धस्य ज्ञानाञ्जनशलाकया ।
चक्षुरुन्मीलितं येन तस्मै श्रीगुरवे नमः ॥

To a *Vedantin* all his actions are nothing but the expression of the Glory of the Guru who is none other than the Supreme Self. How else could I have started this book and above all completed it ! Neither had I the experience nor the scholarship even to conceive such a superhuman task. All that I had with me was the blessings of Poojya Gurudev Swami Chinmayanandaji when I offered myself to work in the field of what may be called "Applied Vedanta". Indeed I was blessed, for without the unbroken flow of Grace from the Guru I would not have had the vision or the ability or even the consistency of purpose which somehow stood with me all thrugh the four long years which it took to compile this book.

When the dim outlines of the book were revealed to me in 1975, I conveyed the same to Poojya Gurudev who was in U.S.A. at that time. Immediately he granted his approval and asked me to begin the task, keeping him informed about all the details regarding the composition, the presentation, the thought development etc., of the book as and when they were revealed to me. From then on, my part of the work was only to keep myself open to His Grace and allow Him to accomplish the work through me.

My prostrations to Poojya Gurudev who tuned me on to the Lord's Grace and made me aware of the play of His Music through the body, mind and intellect. Through each one He sings a different note and yet, conducts everyone to produce the harmonious melody called life. It is my humble hope that many more blessed devotees of Poojya Gurudev will learn His Song as sung through the pages of this book and then compose their own song of life in harmony with it. The stage is ready, the Director is waiting and it is up to us to try our best to follow His

directions and make our lives and a few more around us a little more cheerful, happier and fulfilled.

It was in this spirit of dedication that many gave their assistance without which this work could not have been completed. The first and foremost in the list is my wife Geeta, without whose sacrifice, encouragement and help I could not have devoted myself fully to this long and demanding task. Sri. K. G. B. Gupta, who followed me as secretary of Chinmaya Mission, Bangalore contributed his share by typing out a large portion of the manuscript. Sri. B. Narayana Rao, Retd. Prof., of English and a devoted Chinmaya Study-group Sevak, lovingly spent months together in reading, discussing and correcting the manuscript. Dr. H. Narayana Moorthy, Head of the Dept., of Psychology (Retd), NIMHANS, Bangalore, demonstrated his devotion to *Vedanta* by reading through the corrected manuscript and giving valuable suggestions. Sri. H. G. Anantharaman, Prop. Prasanna Printers, who had always considered it as his duty to help the Mission activities added his quota of service by correcting the proof.

It is my duty at this moment to acknowledge the help and encouragement given by Sri. A. Vasudevan who kindly took over a large portion of my responsibilities during my three year secretaryship of the Bangalore Chinmaya Mission centre. Also it will be improper on my part if I did not mention here the help, encouragement and assistance given to me and my family by my co-brother Sri. P. V. Chandrasekhara Warrier when I resigned from BEL in 1977 to devote myself fully to this book and to other activities of the Chinmaya Mission. Lastly I am grateful to M/s. Gwalior Rayons, who readily came forward to donate the paper required for printing this book.

May the Blessings of Poojya Gurudev shower on all those who gave their helping hand in this noble cause.

In the Service of the Lord,
K. V. K. THAMPURAN
Director,
Chinmaya Vigyana Mandir,
Bangalore.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Isa. Up.	.. Isavasyopanishad
Ke. Up.	.. Kenopanishad
Kat. Up.	.. Kathopanishad
Pr. Up.	.. Prasnopanishad
Ai. Up.	.. Aitareya Upanishad
Tai. Up.	.. Taittiriya Upanishad
Mu. Up.	.. Mundakopanishad
Ma. Up.	.. Mandukya Upanishad
Kai. Up.	.. Kaivalyopanishad
Ma. Ka.	.. Mandukya Karika
Pu. Soo.	.. Purusha Sooktam
N B S	.. Narada Bhakti Sutra
Ge.	.. Bhagavad Geeta
Tat. Bdh.	.. Tatwa Bodha
At. Bdh.	.. Atma Bodh
VC	.. Vivekachoodamani
Dak. Str.	.. Dakshinamoorthy Stot
H T B	.. Hymn to Badrinath



SWAMI CHINMAYANANDA

WHAT TO DO WITH THIS BOOK

Vedanta is a Science and so it must be studied in a systematic way. Don't try to read through; this is not a novel or something of semi-heavy reading. This book is for the students to reflect upon, all by themselves. So don't read more than 5 to 10 pages a day. Read slowly, carefully, noting all the ideas developed therein.

As you read thus, a lot of tiny doubts will arise in your mind; sometimes you may question the very logic of certain conclusions in what you read. Please note them all down in a notebook, kept separate for this purpose. Clearly express your doubts. After having recorded your doubts forget them, and continue reading your daily quota of pages.

On the following Sunday, or on any holiday when you have some spare time, please take up the note-book, and a pencil in hand. Start reading your own doubts collected during the week. You will find surprisingly that you can check off many of the doubts because you have already the answers in you. The week's reading has widened your vision.

May be there are some questions to which you have not the answers. Leave them alone. From Monday continue the regular programme of daily study, and recording all doubts whenever they arise in your bosom. Repeat checking up all the back-log of unanswered doubts. By the time you come to the end of the book, you will find that all your questions are answered



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Go slow. There is no hurry. Your independent thinking is of utmost importance. Don't blindly believe; question every statement; accept no action as greater than your own understanding. Then alone can we enter into the Science of *Vedanta*—then alone our knowledge can unfold our Self.

TRY. YOU CAN; YOU MUST

Section - I

Vedanta and Human Life

1

Evolution of Hindu Philosophy

Unlike the Semitic religions, Hinduism is not bound down by any rigid text-book of commandments and orders, declarations and revelations, but is a store house of scientific facts and has in it healthy impulses of a growing tradition. If a sapling of a tree were to be encased in reinforced concrete it cannot grow; no doubt, it must have a bark of some rigidity, but it must be a live bark that will yield freely to the healthy impulses of growth that come from within the core of the tree. Hinduism, as a Science of Life, recognized this unique fact and has refused to bind its folios rigidly together; it has kept them all in open sheets so that omissions or any new insertions are always possible, except of course, the eternal laws and truths which are fundamental to life. The history of the growth of Hindu Philosophy to-day reads as a monumental saga of the best that man, either as an individual or as a community, had ever accomplished in the history of the world.

The entire science of the spirit preserved through memory was handed down from generation to generation, and it is called the *VEDAS*. These observations on life and declarations of

the experienced Truth were handed down from a generation of masters to a generation of disciples, who, in their turn, handed them down to their disciples. In this process, just as a river gathers more and more waters from its tributaries as it winds along its path towards the sea, the Hindu philosophy grew in bulk and details.

In olden days the entire *Vedic* literature was handed down by the *Gurus* to their disciples by word of mouth, and the students had to preserve it in memory. The scheme worked well so long as the preoccupation of living was not too severe; but as the population increased, the competition in life became keener, and man had to wage his battle of life in almost all his spheres of activity. Accommodation, cultivation, harvesting, transporting, storing, etc.,—all became additional burdens upon man's mental life. Overburdened with these he became unsteady in his intellectual poise and proved incapable of memorizing the voluminous literature and reproducing it faithfully.

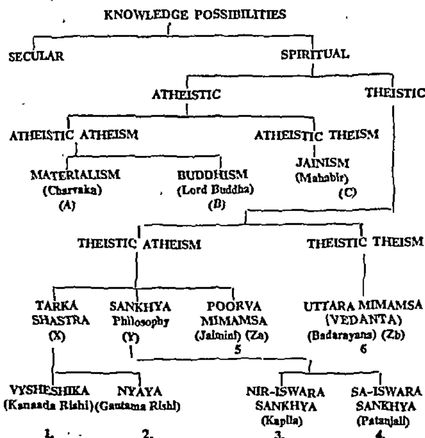
This state of affairs led thinking men to try independently to codify their observations in an attempt to understand the play of life. They constantly endeavoured to crystalize their thoughts into declarations, voicing forth what they finally thought was the Ultimate Reality of life. At various periods of history, different schools thus sprang up, each one arriving at and championing its own formulae for Reality, based upon its own observations and conclusions. No doubt they differed among themselves and each one fought almost tooth and nail with the others; but a careful student looking at all these, can arrive at a more sublime conclusion, which is but the accepted declarations of *Vedanta*.

These independent scholars were forced to bring forth their own intellectual theories to build up and to support their conclusions. They, later on, came to declare unequivocally their own conclusions to the world at large. These conclusions were arrived at, no doubt, by great intellectuals. But in their inner unpreparedness, they reached but wrong conclusions in their own thought processes. In short, the champions of all these different schools used the *Upanishads* as the basis for their arguments, and each believed that the conclusions arrived at were the

Ultimate Truth, even though these conclusions were against true principles of logic, true convictions of reason and immediate force of experience (*anubhava*).

We have thus in Indian philosophy today, altogether six recognized main schools of thought, all of them arguing differently to arrive at seemingly independent conclusions, which, when digested by a sincere student (*sadhak*), would indicate the same Truth. To help us gain a comparative estimate of the relative merits of these different systems of thought, scholars have provided us with a beautiful classification of all these schools of thought.

In the chart given below you will find the different philosophies classified according to the system of Hindu tradition.



The *Shad-Dharsanas* or the Six Schools of Philosophy are considered by some as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6, and by others as constituted by (A), (B), (C), (X), (Y) and (Za + Zb).

Knowledge available for man in the world, whatever be the source, falls under two distinct groups. According to *Vedas*, knowledge can take us to an understanding and appreciation of either the objects of the world outside us, or our own inner Real Nature. Thus, we see in the *Mundakopanishad*, the teacher Angiras starting his discourse with a classification of the entire possibility-of-knowledge. He says to his disciple that the knowledge-possibilities fall into two distinct groups; the lower and the higher—the terrestrial and the transcendental.

*** To him (Saunaka), *Angiras* said, "There are two kinds of knowledge to be acquired, namely, *Apara* and *Para*—the lower and the higher. So say those (the great seers of the *Upanishads*) who know *Brahman*."**

All knowledge that contributes to our better understanding of the world outside, falls under the category of "*Secular Knowledge*" as distinct from "*Spiritual knowledge*". We are not concerned here with "Secular Knowledge", as our theme is an enquiry into the "Spiritual". "*Spiritual Knowledge*" is that branch of knowledge which, in its fulfilment, takes us towards a subjective experience of the Reality behind the phenomenal world, that is the very *Life-Spark* in us.

The Spiritual Knowledge available to man is broadly divided into two groups—"*Atheistic*" and "*Theistic*". This division should not be taken to have the commonly understood connotation for *Atheism* and *Theism*—indicating either the absence or the presence of faith in a Divine Truth or Prophet. Here, in this classification, atheists are those who neither believe in any Fundamental Truth other than the body and the world outside, nor have any faith in the *Vedic* declarations and scriptural truths. In short,

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* तस्मै स होवाच – द्वे विद्ये वेदितव्ये इति ह स्म ।
यद् ब्रह्मविदो वदन्ति परा चैवापरा च ॥

(Mu. Up, Ch. I, Sec. I–4)

they believe only in knowledge gained through direct perception. Since *Atman* (the Self) cannot be seen or perceived by any ordinary known means, they refuse to accept the *vedantic* declarations and the Diviner possibilities in man.

Even among the atheistic we can perceive two types : those who are full-fledged atheists, indicated in the chart under "*Atheistic Atheism*", and those who, though not believing in the *Vedas*, certainly believe in a subtle truth other than the gross body and the objects of the world. These fall under "*Atheistic Theism*". "*Atheistic Atheism*" was preached by the two philosophers, Charvaka and Buddha. Charvakas believe that there is no God or Ideal and no goal to be achieved in life other than a so-called happy living in complete sensuousness, unrestrained even by any sentimental scruples, ethical or moral. They believe that we come from nowhere and go nowhere, and that we just are. The only bliss of living in this world is the joy of eating and indulging — and this is the only goal that needs to be considered and endeavoured for in life. If Epicureanism is enunciated with a tight and exhaustive philosophy it would simply be, we may say, the *Charvaka – Philosophy*. Necessarily therefore, they fall under the category of out and out Atheists, indicated in the Chart as "*Atheistic Atheism*".

When we say that Buddhism also falls under the same classification, we mean "Atheism" without the sting in the word "Atheism" which the theists have now come to associate with it. It only indicates that Buddha, as a revolt against excessive Vedic-ritualism of his age, had to deny its authority. The Eternal according to Buddhistic belief, is declared by one group of Buddhists (*Asat-Vadins*) as "Nonexistent" and by another group (*Kshanika-Vignana-Vadins*) as an ever-changing series of consciousness-flickerings in the intelligence.

Jainism falls under the classification of "*Atheistic Theism*" inasmuch as Sri Mahavir also denied to *Vedas* any sanction of Truth, but he believed in the *Eternal Truth* which is constant and permanent, perfect and blissful. Thus, the philosophy of Mahavir falls in this scheme of classification under the heading "*Atheistic Theism*".

Taking the *Theistic* schools of philosophy, we find that they too fall under two groups, "*Theistic Atheism*" and "*Theistic Theism*". *Theistic Atheists* are those who believe in the Vedic declarations, but do not believe in the One Eternal Divine Factor indicated by the word *Brahman* in the Vedic lore. "*Theistic Theism*" represents the philosophy that believes not only in the *Vedas* as a great source of true knowledge, but also in the non-dual *Brahman*, 'the One Eternal Truth indicated by the Upanishadic declarations.

"*Theistic Atheism*" which does not believe that Truth can be realized only by the study of, reflections in and deep meditations upon the Upanishadic declarations, falls under three main groups: "*Tarka*", "*Sankhya*" and "*Purva-Mimamsa*". The *Tarka Shastra* contains the points of view arrived at by Kanaada *Rishi* and Gautama *Rishi*. Kanaada's philosophy, "*Vysheshika*", differs now and then from Gautama's philosophy, "*Nyaya*". *Nyaya* and *Vysheshika* are two parallel streams of thought, now and then parting, — to flow on the two sides of some insurmountable mountain of objections — only to meet again and flow hand in hand, until they meet another difference in conception; yet they both take us to the same Infinite Ocean of Bliss.

The *Sankhya* philosophy is the most scientific in treatment, and so perhaps, the most appealing to the modern mind of our scientific age. The Sankhyans are extremely rational, their scientific approach has the flavour of modernity. The Sankhyans again fall under two groups, marshalled behind two great expounders of this school of thought, Kapila and Pathanjali. Kapila's philosophy does not take into consideration the God-Principle; while Pathanjali adds to the fundamental factors of his doctrine, the concept of *Iswara* also. On this basis, these philosophies are termed "*Nir-Iswara Sankhya*" and "*Sa-Iswara Sankhya*".

The third school of philsophy that falls under "*Theistic Atheism*" is the "*Purva* (earlier) *Mimamsa*". *Mimamsa* means sequence in logical thinking. The *Vedas* proclaim their bulk of declarations in two distinct layers — (i) the earlier section (*Karma Kanda*), seemingly dualistic, and (ii) the latter portion (*Jnana*

Kanda), positively non-dualistic. The earlier Vedic thought, the logic, and the conclusions were compiled together to form a perfect philosophy by *Maharshi* Jaimini. *Jaimini Sutras* constitute the Bible of the *Purva-Mimamsa*.

According to this philosophy, man has to follow faithfully the ritualistic portion of the *Vedas*, as a result of which infinite merits accrue. To enjoy the fruits of such merits, the individual souls get a chance to live for a fixed period of time in a Realm of Consciousness where they can experience subtler and more intense sense enjoyments. This temporary resort to the Heavens is conceived by the followers of *Purva-Mimamsa* as the Goal of Existence.

Pure "*Theistic Theism*" is preached in the *Brahma Sutras* by Badarayana, who has been identified as Vyasa, the author of the *Geeta*. The philosophy enunciated in the *Brahma Sutras* is a crystallization of the points of view preached in the *Upanishads*; and this is known as *Uttara-Mimamsa*. Later on, this school was brought to prominence from out of its obscurity and expounded as *Advaita Vedanta* by Sri Shankaracharya.

Thus, by the time Vyasa appeared on the scene of the Hindu intellectual life, there were many schools of philosophy, prominent among which were those enumerated above. The champions of all these six schools quoted the *Upanishads* literally, argued elaborately and quite often illogically and came to wrong conclusions. Each of them believed that his conclusions were the ultimate truth, even though these conclusions were against the final assertions of the Scriptures, the principles of logic, the convictions of reason and the immediate urgency of experiences. But the average man, usually incapable of independent thinking, naturally followed the scholars of the age; thus these philosophies had large followings in their own times.

Hinduism was then facing the danger of a total annihilation. Hindu Scripture was fast fading away even among those who were supposed to be the custodians of the sacred lore. It was at such a crucial juncture in spiritual history that we find the advent of the great revolutionary reformer, the poet-philosopher, Vyasa. He

collected the Vedic passages and for the first time edited them into four written volumes, which constitute to-day the four great *Vedas* of the Hindus, the *Rig Veda*, the *Yajur Veda*, the *Sama Veda* and the *Atharvana Veda*. Each *Veda* contains three sections: the *Mantra* portion, the *Brahmana* section and the *Upanishads.* Thus, the *Upanishads* are all found in the last section of each *Veda*; therefore, the philosophy of the Upanishads has come to be called *VEDANTA* (the end of *Veda*).

Taking a general view of the total contents of the *Vedas*, we can easily find that the earlier portions of *Mantras* are the description of the Truth perceived by the poets through the trellis of the names-and-forms that paint Mother Nature's beauty; the *Brahmanas* constitute the description of the same Eternal Truth seen through the intricate intellectual machinery of the priests; and the *Upanishads* constitute the declarations of the Philosophers who have climbed along the precipitous sides of mellow wisdom to reach the pinnacles of brilliant experiences of the Eternal and Perfect. In short, the poet, the priest and the philosopher, all gazing at the effulgence of the same spiritual Truth that lies concealed behind the jungles of the body mind and intellect, have sung in their own language the ecstatic song of wonderment and silent inspiration which was treasured by our forefathers. These flashes of sparkling wisdom handed down to us form the sacred heritage of the Hindu Culture, compiled and preserved are the volumes called *VEDAS.*

In the *Vedas*, Truth is not described. It is not even defined. It is only *indicated.* A subtle intellect that can follow the extremely scientific arguments and a flowing heart of sympathetic love ringing in unison with the bosom of the master, when fired with faith, devotion, earnestness, sincerity and goodwill, alone can appreciate and understand *Vedanta*, and ultimately come to experience the glory of the Divine Reality behind the seeming sorrows and apparent imperfections of the world.

To the Vedantin, *Veda* is immortal and eternal. This view might grate against the modern educated view. To the modern sceptic however it is certainly a revolting *idea*, smelling of antiquity and thriving only in blind faith. But this opinion can occur only

to a hasty student who does not scientifically approach this statement, and does not understand the depth of its significance. When we examine its content closer, we shall discover that it is not, after all, such a dictatorial blind belief thrust upon us from the *Vedanta* platform.

In the primary meaning *Veda* is a mere text-book in *Sanskrit*. It is only in its secondary meaning that it comes to acquire a suggestiveness as a "Bible in four great volumes". The word *Veda* comes from the sanskrit root "Vid" meaning "to know"; thus *Veda* means "Knowledge". Since this text-book deals with knowledge as its subject matter, the entire literature has come to be named as the *Vedas*.

When we walk into a modern library, we can come across shelves labelled as "Philosophy" or "Poetry" or "Electricity" or even as "Skulls"! These labels do not mean that these shelves are filled with these stuffs! It only means that they contain books dealing with these special subjects. In the day-to-day life it is quite natural for us in our conversation to use the name of the contained for the name of the container. Thus, when the Hindus believe that the *Vedas* are Eternal, neither do they mean that their *Palmyrah-books* are indestructible nor do they feel that their *Bhoja-Patrams* are imperishable.

As a matter of fact the Hindu philosophers insist upon the belief that the entire world of matter is finite, and that the only permanence in it is the very "Principle of their impermanence". As such, when they say, "The *Vedas* are Eternal", they only mean that the knowledge which is the very theme of the Vedic-literature is Eternal.

Let us try to illustrate the idea with a modern example. From the days of Newton's discovery of Gravity, we know that there has been a measurable quantity of force, called the Gravitational Force, with which the earth is ever attracting every other thing towards its centre. Now, are we not right if we say that the gravitational force is eternal in the sense that it was silently acting even before the eventful afternoon when the apple fell upon the nose of Newton and made him sit up, ponder over and discover

the force of Gravity? And now, even long after that incident that force is still acting upon things on or about the Earth.

Just as this gravitational force — or for that matter, electricity or the energy-content of each atom — is eternal, so too, the Truth discussed in the *Vedas* is Eternal; it is not the *Veda* text-books; they may even get destroyed in some tragic accident. But no harm can ever come to the Truth, the Self, which is the theme of the sacred *Vedas*.

Similarly, the Truth as the Conscious Principle in us, in its all pervasive homogeneous nature, does not at all depend upon any generation's intellectual cognition and spiritual experience. In a given generation even if the majority have come to experience this Eternal Unity underlying the pluralistic diversity of the phenomenal world, the *Vedas* do not gain thereby any greater status. The mountain range Alps is there in Europe whether you know it or not. The majesty or grandeur and the might or strength of the Niagra Falls do not in any way depend upon our individual personal knowledge of them!!

Thus it is perfectly correct to declare that " The *Vedas* are Eternal ". In saying so, Hindus do not mean to contradict what is said in the other Bibles of the world, nor have they any disrespect towards any of them. Also, they do not mean to look down upon any possible future prophets or their Bibles. All prophets declare only some aspects of the *Vedas*; therefore irrespective of any new arrivals, unchallenged by any of the existing testaments and unaffected by any disregard shown to it, the *Vedas* eternally rule the Kingdom of Knowledge, for ever and for ever, and stand for all that is noble and pure in Human life.

The discovery of the True and the Eternal in the nature of man, is not an accidental gift-parcel from any God to any chosen *Rishi* of any blessed era. It is the birthright of every man to know his True Nature. In any century, when there are communal happiness, social security and individual prosperity, that generation can be guided to live seeking the nobler aims of life. They then will come to discover for themselves the fundamentals of the inner world — as readily and as easily as the scientific world of

today opens Nature's Pandorabox during periods of war, only to let loose more and more painful and trecherous, outrageous and deadly weapons to annihilate itself!!

Whatever be the reason, — and certainly there must have been sufficient reason — for the first time, Vyasa, the poet-philosopher, who was at once a far sighted visionary and a close observer of the cultural trends of his time, found sufficient heroism and courage to blast the chains of the then existing tradition. For the first time the *Vedic-Mantras* were gathered and recorded in a written language! Until his time every new edition of *Veda* was composed only in the mind of the *Guru* and printed directly on the memory-slabs of the pupil's hearts; Vyasa brought out the first *Bhoja-patram* and *Palmyrah* edition of the great knowledge, the theme of the *Vedas.*

In compiling the *Veda-Mantras* the great *Rishi* brought to bear on the great task the superhuman genius of his personality, and thus found the divine courage to edit them properly into the four Vedic Text-books, The *Rig-Veda*, the *Yajur-Veda*, the *Sama-Veda* and the *Atharvana-Veda.* The Systematic thinker in Vyasa was not satisfied by merely classifying the entire wealth of the Vedic knowledge into the four volumes; but in each volume, he brought about also a harmonious rhythm, both in the arrangement and in the classification of the book-contents.

Each of the Vedic text books, in its body content, was again distinctly grouped into three sections. The first section contains mainly expressions of wonderment, joy and ecstasy at the echoing visions of beauty in Nature's exuberance. In and through these songs runs a uniform cord of an imperceptible cognition of an ever-elusive Power behind the phenomenal happenings, which orders, regulates and maintains a clear harmony amidst the *seeming* throng of discord in the outer world.

In the second section of the *Vedas,* we have the detailed and scientific descriptions and very conclusive instructions as to how the various ritualistic performances are to be undertaken. These have been prescribed as sacred methods to invoke the Mighty Power behind Nature to bless the devotee so that his desires may

ripen into fulfilment. In childhood man's mental pre-occupations are all edged with sheer wonderment; in youth man's bosom is ever riddled with the unending storms of his desires, and he then thirsts for their fulfilment, in terms of his material success, glory, wealth, etc.

At this stage of development of the individual, an unintelligent and abrupt denial of sensual pleasures and blind following of scriptural injunctions, result in suppression in him. This suppression, if continued over a period of time, leads to bitterness, frustration and cynicism in life. If however, he chooses the other alternative and continues indulgence in sensual pleasures, the senses, being very strong and over-powering will pull him down into the abyss of carnality and animalism. Any attempt thereafter to live a spiritual life will be impossible.

The religious masters arrived at a solution for this problem by prescribing an intelligent formula by which man could aspire to a higher spiritual living. They held that physical indulgence might be well regulated, but not denied to the extent of causing suppression and frustration. Their demand was for an initial self-control based on the intellectual apprehension of the logic underlying it. To the extent to which an individual regulates his sensual indulgences, to that extent there will be a proportionate intellectual education in the higher values of life with the consequent understanding of the futility of such indulgence. Conversely, to the extent he apprehends and digests the higher and nobler ideas governing life, to that extent he can afford to live a life of self-restraint. Thus by mutual intelligent adjustment of study and application man can sublimate his lower urges and reach the peak of Perfection and Bliss.

Since, in its uncontrollable adolesence and youth, the human mind does entertain passions and desires, the great *Rishis* found a distinct technique by which these tumultous and stormy passions and desires can be conserved, directed and made to bless the very bosom over which they rule. The strict technique of reconstructing the mind and intellect, with the help of the very same forces of the enemical powers that reach a human bosom to conquer, is contained in these psychological strategies as detailed in the *Karma Kanda*

(the second section) of the *Vedas.*

The *Karma Kanda* contains two sections; one deals with the grosser, giving out exhaustively all the rules of the ritualistic actions and providing prescriptions for the elaborate arrangements for the *Yagnas* etc., while the other portion, comparatively subtler, explains the meditations that are part and parcel of the Vedic ritualism. This is called *Upasana Kanda.*

It must be evident now, that from the childhood days of wonderment to the adolescent years of uncontrollable self-deluding desires and ultimately to the comparatively quieter days of maturity and meditation, the individual grows to be sufficiently balanced in mind and intellect and becomes fit to enter the portals of discriminative self-analysis and intelligent philosophical contemplations. These matured ones are served in the last sections of the *Vedas,* called the *Upanishads*; they are otherwise called the *Aranyakas,* the text-books that can be studied with profit only in the quiteness of the Himalayan Valleys, in a [illegible] climate of psychological and intellectual retirement from the stormy outbursts of desires and passions.

Just as in Literature, the study of a poet or a [illegible] incomplete without a study of the history of his [illegible] and personality of the author, so too in [illegible] of the *Upanishads* is not very helpful unless we [illegible] of the physical, mental and intellectual [illegible] *Rishis* and the social order of their times. [illegible] when this our land of the *Rishis,* [illegible] was rich with Nature's innocent [illegible] nowhere else in the world was a [illegible] and a climate so salubrious. The people [illegible] extravagance of beauty in the [illegible] in themselves an irresistible [illegible] imaginative and contemplative [illegible]

These were a [illegible] meditation and acute [illegible] of physical endurance. [illegible] in the Path of Truth [illegible]

To them any sacrifice was but child's play, since they had the courage of conviction to live up to their own intellectual convictions.

Exhausting all the possibilities of sciences they came to the logical terminus of all material knowledge. Their search brought them to turn inward; they continued their seekings after the Ultimate in the depths of their own nature and personality. In complete detachment from life, they observed the panorama of happenings in the outer world and evaluated it in terms of the mental and intellectual reactions it created upon the individuals. Thus the material scientists in them grew up in a slow and steady evolution, to become spiritual seekers, the scientists of life. What each generation, in its observations, analysis and estimation came to understand of life, it handed over intact to the younger generation and trained the new youths to continue the work afresh in the "Laboratory of Life."

The new generation, thus equipped with the necessary physical, mental and intellectual temperaments, plunged into work, questioning and observing, seeking and analysing, concentrating and meditating, and thus peeping into new Realms of Knowledge not as mere hypothetical theories and ideas, but as vitally lived experience of a joyous dynamism thrilling with its perfections. Thus with generation after generation, this science grew, and at each master's hands the expressions gained an added glow in their inimitable beauty, rhythm and contents. It is these experiences of knowledge that crystallized into the brief statements of voluminous import, and they were collected and compiled into books which we call *Upanishads.*

All the *Upanishads* are therefore, a dialogue between a learned man of realized-wisdom living a life of perfection in Truth, and his disciples, who approached the feet of the master seeking the great Goal of Life and imploring his help to reach it. In some of the *Upanishads* the dramatic scene is in all its details etched out perfectly; in others it is only hinted at by fine strokes of artistic finish; and in yet others, the teacher and the taught are merely hinted at tacitly.

In and through the *Mantras* however, a serious student of the

Upanishads can always watch the scene of an aged teacher beaming with benevolence, purity, glory and kindness and anxiously peeping at an young boy of perfect *Brahmacharya* sitting in front of him, excited with doubts, calm in his courage, determined to seek and submissive in faith. As the conversation progress, while removing the doubt of the particular student, the teacher through his disciple, talks to us about the meaning of life, the purpose of existence, the diagnosis of our sorrows and also the remedy for all our weaknesses.

Thus from the teacher to the taught, the Supreme Knowledge has come down, each succeeding Master gaining in authority and wealth of detail. These Master-minds were so selflessly true to their pursuit after Truth that they, in the thrill of their divine adventure, ignored even themselves! We have rarely any mention of these men in the body of the *Upanishads*. In almost all the *Upanishads* the authors are unknown; perhaps they thought it was not worthwhile to add their signatures at the end of their masterpieces.

To them the Discovery was all-important, not the individual discoverer. They knew that man has but a few years of bubblelike existence; they recognized the hollowness of personal fame and name. They sought immortality not in the place of memory of the succeeding generations, but in a subtler plane of the Eternal Consciousness.

Such a brilliant line of seekers, each proclaiming the same Truth, could not be false (in any sense of the term) in their statements. In our times, a modern philosopher might sing even a wrong note to earn wealth, to gain social recognition, to flatter his publisher or to capture the fancy of the reading public; but to the Upanishad-Seers no gain was a consideration sufficiently tempting to swerve from Truth Even kings had no hold on them, and they the Seers lived in absolute freedom. They were in their inner perfections, devout nobilities, mighty in thier powers of intellect, consummate in their renunciation, detached from court life and therefore truly Kings of Kings. They had the grit born of True Knowledge, to declare even to the mighty emperor, that he was a sad worm, helpless and pain-ridden, ever poor and

powerless! The details of their great self-discovery were not thrust down on all; they were given out only to such mature minds who had approached their presence, hungry and thirsty for this Supreme - Knowledge. We can observe that these Teachers, though varying in their modes of approaches, all of them, without even a single exception, reach the same Divine Goal.

The *Upanishads* are revelations and not the products of the individual mind and the intellect. By a long process of practice, control and discipline, the mind and the intellect are trained to soar into the higher realms of greater subtleties and to remain there in angelic poise and grace. In their very lightness, at such dizzy heights of soaring and seeking, they seem to roll off into a vaporous nothingness! This is the fulfilment of all *Yogas*. When thus the mind is sublimated, a faculty called intuition is awakened in man; Truth is realized intuitively by the Seers and Sages. The Absolute Truth is neither imagined nor rationally determined; it is intuitively experienced.

The *Upanishads* contain the cream of the *Vedas*. They constitute the sacred Bible of the Hindus; alas! now a days it is an unknown text-book to the ignorant Hindus! Even the educated erudite pundit-class is, for all practical purposes, absolutely ill-informed in the field of the *Upanishads*, because the *Upanishadic* study cannot be undertaken merely with the help of either the sledge-hammer of language-knowledge or the pickaxe of word-meanings! Equipped with these instruments, when the grammarians and dictionary-muggers reach the *Upanishads*, they make them as bald as the profit-mongering forest contractors have made our lofty Himalayan slopes!

The word *Upanishad* has been coined with a purpose to indicate completely some pregnant suggestions. The word is made by combining the word elements "Upa" which means "with" and "Ni" which means "below" and "Shad" which means "to sit"; totally it means "to sit at the feet of the master and learn". Thus the very word indicates that this is a science that should be learnt at the feet of the master, because if you read it with the help of an encyclopaedia, the true import of the scriptures will surely be lost sight of.

However, the Indian scholars give a deeper significance to the term "Upa-ni-shad". By interpreting the word "shad" to mean "destruction", the term "Upa-ni-shad" means a literature that destroys our present ignorance of Reality by revealing the experience of the Supreme; when "shad" means "approach", the term indicates that it is a literature that helps the student approach or attain the Supreme Wisdom. Thus, *Upanishad* is a volume of knowledge to be rightly understood from a specialist. The student must, through a process of living, come to experience fully the subjective glow of God-Consciousness; thereafter he becomes redeemed eternally from all his sense of finitude and mortal limitations.

The theme of the *Upanishads* is the Infinite, the Eternal. It describes the realm that lies beyond the worlds that are now known to us, as perceived and experienced through the gross equipments of our body, mind and intellect. Beyond the purview of the waking, dream and deep-sleep states, lies stretched the soft world of Bliss and Beatitude where the finite mortal rediscovers himself to be none other than God, the Infinite. Necessarily therefore, the language of the market place, the words of the drawing-room, the phrases of the slums and the slang of the drinking-booth can never hope to express the perfect, the Immortal. In fact language cannot define, cannot describe and cannot even vaguely report upon the transcendental experience which one comes to live in the stillness of one's own mind. Therefore, to define truth is to defy Truth.

In our daily transaction we use language and we are apt to exaggerate the capacity of the words; in modern times we have almost the feeling that there can be nothing which we can experience but cannot express. This is only an exaggerated *faith in language, almost a superstition. Scientifically analysed,* we can discover the limitations of words; they in themselves, for all our day to day practical purposes, are mighty and almost all-powerful. Words can be employed, the *Rishis* have discovered, only in expressing four types of categories; beyond these, words are mere helpless sounds. They can describe the substance (*Vasthu*), they can describe the properties (*gunas*), they can describe vividly all the activities (*kriyas*) and also they can descri —and

exactly point out the innumerable shades of the relationships that exist among the finite things of the world (*sambandha*). Beyond these four-fold categories words cannot express anything at all; in fact, these four together constitute the entire world of finite things. But if there be a Truth or a factor that cannot fall into any definite species, has no qualities, has no action in itself and does not maintain any relationship with anything else in the world, certainly, that Truth can never be expressed by gross finite words of any language in the world.

And yet, these great *Rishis* have made a successful attempt, not so much perhaps, in expressing directly the concept of the Infinite, as in conveying it to the intuitive appreciation of at least such *sadhaks* as are prepared to live it. The impossible has thus been made possible by employing the suggestiveness of the words used and not because of the literal word-meaning of the language employed. Therefore, we can find that the *Upanishads,* if learnt through a dictionary-understanding of the language, land us in a morass of confusions, un-understandings and mis-understandings.

Finite words can never successfully define the Infinite. The so-called definitions of Truth and the explanations of that Plane of Consciousness, which form the core of the *Upanishads,* are all ideas described in words, which, when consistently pursued with full concentration and intensity of application, can take the mind of the meditator to such rare heights of roaring silence, that therein he gains an experience of the "true awakening". Thus, the very terms employed in the *Mantras* are not only signposts pointing towards Truth but they themselves are the very stepping stones on that dexterous path.

Altogether there are about 280 *Upanishads* so far unearthed, and the scholars are still continuing their research in fixing up their authenticity and the relative dates of their composition, and thereby the chronology of their development. One hundred and eight of them have been accepted by the Pandit-class as orthodox and authentic texts. Of these 108 Upanishads, eleven have been commented upon by the recent master-minds, the *Acharyas,* Sri Shankara, Sri Ramanuja and Sri Madhwa. Because of the exhaus-

tive and learned exposition by these master-minds, these 11 *Upanishads* have naturally become the most important texts for the *sadhaks*. Relatively therefore, the *Upanishads* other than these eleven, are considered as *minor* ones. It must be particularly noted that they are not at all *minor* ones in their contents or in the depth of their thoughts or in the thoroughness of their exposition. They are *minor* only with reference to the knowledge the *sadhaks* have already gathered from the study of the 11 *Upanisads* with the help of the famous learned and exhaustive *Bhashyas*.

The Upanishadic *Mantras* are dehydrated expressions bereft of any over-explanation—mere scientific statement of facts—indicating the Pure Truth; they are thus preserved for all times. In order to understand them, we have to pour the waters of explanations from living teachers, shake them properly in our own hearts with our own independent reflections until they become digestible food for the seekers among us. Milk-powder may be nourshing food, but it requires processing before it could be used as milk. Similarly, one cannot relish the taste of the *Upanishads*, unless they are properly processed by a Guru or a Teacher. Thus, the Upanishadic *Mantras* are the crystallized ideas of Pure Truth explained in the language of brief formulae.

Therefore, even after editing, codifying and publishing the *Vedas*, *Bhagavan* Vyasa must have felt that he was not thereby serving the world-at-large comprising common folk. Hence, he wrote the various *Puranas*, incorporating therein the essence of the philosophical poem, the *Geeta*, which is the summary of the Upanishadic conclusions on life. He made the philosophical secrets serve the common man as they are applicable to a work-a-day world. *Geeta* has thus become the Gospel of the Hindu culture and a Hand-book of Instruction not only for us, but also for the whole world of humanity.

Bhagavan Vyasa, in his infinite love for his brethren, brought out the subjective science of *Vedanta* in an objective representation so as to serve the simple understanding of the ordinary man. No other person could have ventured to attempt such a bold programme. The Sage Vyasa alone could accomplish such a superhuman undertaking, and he did spread the knowledge of the

Vedic culture all over the country. He brought out the light of the Vedantic philosophy through the *Puranas*. Here also he used the same methods or the techniques that were already used in the *Vedas*, but on a more elaborate scale and in poetic style.

In the *Puranas* a story is built around a Divine Hero pictured as an ordinary mortal, with the usual events, good and bad, incidental to any man of the world. But in between such events, is brought out the glow, the joy and the cheer of the Inner Self within man. He not only takes us, the students in search of the Eternal Truth, to the world-of-objects, but through them opens up a way to find the inward tranquillity, the inspiration of the Inner Self. There are 18 such *Puranas* within the compass of which all possible combinations of the experiences in life in the world outside are painted.

One of the most masterly works brought out by the superminded Vyasa is the *Mahabharata*. This epic is written in a classical style and even the research scholars in the west, who have had the privilege of studying this text-book, have declared that such " a classical literature as the *Mahabharata* was never written nor even conceived of in the world at any time ". This is a voluminous compendium and is rightly considered as the " fifth " *Veda*. This book is called so because it is said " that which is not expressed or explained in *Mahabharata* is not worth knowing ", meaning thereby, that all knowledge that was available at that time had found a place in it. The *Mahabharata* is a heroic story of great men and women. A literature can be called classical only when it embodies in it all bits of knowledge that are available, bits of traditions and superstitions, a little bit of history, geography, sociology, etc. So this book can be called the " *Encylopaedia Indianica* " !

Shrimad Bhagawad Geeta, the Divine Song of the Lord, occurs in the *Bhishma Parva* of the *Mahabharata* and comprises 18 chapters, from the 25th to the 42nd. This great hand-book of practical living marks a positive revolution in Hindusim; and it inaugurated a great Hindu Renaissance for the ages that followed the Puranic Era.

Perhpas, in the early days of the Vedic culture, the population being thin, the necessity for a strict social scheme of living was not felt; therefore, a mere call for personal development was more than sufficient to inspire a cultural living. But as time passed, the population increased. In the crowded social living, a thousand ethical and moral lapses had come to manifest. In the bitter political tensions, men had come to live a new pattern of existence in which the good old mild philosophy could find no ready response. The necessity for a restatement of the same *Vedic Principles was urgently felt if the Hindu generations were* to face their new challenges and maintain their spiritual values.

From time to time an ancient philosophy need an intelligent re-interpretation in the context of the new times; men of wisdom, prophets and seers must guide the common man as to how he can apply effectively the ancient laws to his present pattern of life. Whenever such a great Master arrives to re-establish the old truths and teach his generation to face efficiently the present with the values of the old ideals, that great person will be considered by the generation as a God-Man or an *Avatar.*

Vyasa was one of those sages who had the vast vision of the past and the great imagination to visualise the future, which he employed in tackling the problems of misuse and decadence in his immediate present. Had he dared to declare these restatements as his own original ideas, probably it would have been difficult even for him to persuade his generation to follow them. It was very characteristic of the Hindus not to accept readily a new idea or ideal unless it had the sanction and the authority of a *rishi*-declaration.

Therefore, Vyasa depicted the story of the Divine Incarnation of Lord Krishna, who is also called Vasudeva, the *Paramatman.* Lord Krishna was made to declare the new message of the *Geeta* which is, as we shall find, nothing but a re-interpretation of the ancient knowledge of the *Upanishads* with proper emphasis upon certain vital factors which seemed to have been by then distorted and dried up out of recognition in the parched mouths of the machanically repeating Pundit.

Thus, as mentioned earlier, if the *Upanishads* are the Text-books of philosophical knowledge discussing man, world and God, the *Geeta* is a hand-book of instructions expounding how every man can come to live the subtle philosophical principles of *Vedanta* in the actual work-a-day world and thus can become a true citizen of this incomparable *Arya Varta*, Bharat and ultimately, a true citizen of the world.

The *Geeta* offers a solution to all the problems of humanity—this is the repeated claim of scholars. Let us experiment upon it ourselves with a view to find out its truths, so that, we as individuals, may bring about a greater stability of mind and a greater harmony within ourselves in our day-to-day life. The *Geeta* is very intimately connected with the life of every one of us, whether it be in the market-place, at home or in the political field. We have to come into contact with the world outside and in doing so, we must know the art of setting up right contacts. If we contact it unintelligently, the world may crush us altogether. The world has no mercy—it has only its laws.

Bhagavad Geeta not only indicates theories of the Hindu-way-of-life, but also reveals certain definite schemes by which every individual can work out his own self-improvement. In the *Bhagavad Geeta*, philosophical theories are couched in a language of least confusion and schemes which are unique in their variety and effectiveness are suggested for self-improvement. They are most acceptable to the intelligent modern men (especially the youth) as they are direct, simple, and easy-to-do exercises for the unfoldment of the personality in man.

The *Geeta* particularly addresses itself to the average man. Mental problems such as vague restlessness, impossible aspirations, unending desires, utter illusionments, and suffocating despairs, entombing dejections, shattering confusions—nay, even the self-deluding sense of materialism in life—all these are depicted in Arjuna. Krishna's psychological treatment for the ailments of this Pandava Prince co[illegible] the main theme of the *Bhagavad Geeta*.

To channeli[illegible] resourc[illegible]

they must first be trained to *study* the problems of life and to *evaluate* each of them correctly. This calls forth a special mental balance and an unerring intellectual self-application. With such a balanced mind and intellect, the youth can arrive at potentially creative judgements and constructive conclusions. In the very midst of confusing situations, how can anyone train the mind and intellect to evaluate and judge explosive conditions, threatening challenges and suffocating situations? This 'Know-how' is explained exhaustively in the *Bhagavad Geeta.*

A very similar situation existed in the *Mahabharata* times and a message had been given by the subtle thinkers of the era to the despondent youth of those times. Arjuna represents the world of youth, and through Arjuna *Bhagavad Geeta* gives out thundering forth the solution to the problems of the world outside. *He is placed against a background of the din* and roar of a self-annihilating civil war in his country.

The opening chapter of the *Geeta* paints for us a confusing atmosphere of strife and tension, of sweat and dust, of din and roar, *quite natural in every war-front Apart from the clamouring* sounds and rattling noises of the impatient armies standing face to face, we are given also a peep into the tension created in the subjective minds of the people by the tragic outer situation The challenge is not merely outside men, but it springs forth from within men's own bosoms. The disturbances created by the mental stresses and strains churn the within of the men of action, and they come to feel as if lost. In fact, this inner chaos gets itself projected to express as the outer disturbances around. Examples are many about us today to illustrate the scientific truth of this statement. Many of the strikes, whether they be in the industrial concerns or in the universities or even in our administration itself, ultimately erupt from the inner tensions, which were restrained and suppressed for a long period of time in the past.

This inner shattering of the psychological personality in man is portrayed very vividly in the characterization of Arjuna of the *Bhagavad Geeta,* in which the Pandava Prince represents typically the confused man of the world today and the deluded

youth of all times. The case-history of Arjuna is recorded with scientific precision in the opening chapter of the *Bhagavad Geeta.*

This great warrior, who had proved his prowess many a time earlier, comes to the warfront as the Commander-in-Chief of the Pandava forces and reviews the array of the enemy lines. He discovers that the unholy hordes who are championing the unjust cause born out of pure covetousness and lust for power, are apparently more powerful. The Kaurava forces are larger in number, better equipped and more efficiently manned by his revered Grand-sire, Bhishma, and *Guru* Drona. Compared with these forces of relentless materialism, the Pandava forces, representing the saner and the nobler values-of-life, are apparently weak, incompetent and inefficient. This tragic situation makes the warrior in Arjuna slowly sink into a state of utter dejection, a psychological state of impotency and helpless state of hysteria. When one is convinced that one must fight against certain abnoxious tendencies, and yet, when one realizes that in the circumstances one dares not to strike, the resulting mental condition, the painful delusion is called " dejection. "

Arjuna is represented in the *Bhagavad Geeta* as an enthusiastic soldier who has reached this benumbing state of utter dejection. In such a state of dejection, the intelligent man of action, Arjuna discovers in himself many a logical argument, each one apparently righteous, to convince himself that he should run away from the field of his duty and from positive action. This weakness, a sense of escapism is detrimental to any great achievement. But all psychological cowards, unconsciously live this life of escapism. At all such moments human intellect has got the ability in itself, to seek and to find false justifications supporting its own self-escapism.

Arjuna feels that he cannot fulfil his duty towards his nation. He brings forth a chain of empty arguments, all of them extremely sentimental, highly emotional and apparently reasonable. On the whole, Vyasa the author, demostrates through Arjuna a total break up of the human personality under the stress and strain of its own immediate environment.

Under the *Arjuna-state,* any man would sink into a hysterical condition and at such a time, he loses his ability to discriminate correctly as to what should be done and what should not be done. Temporarily his sanity is robbed from him by the rising fumes of confusions in his own bosom, and he comes to behave madly. Such a state is suicidal, and often brings on tragedy to himself and to the entire society.

In short, at such tragic moments when man loses his ability to think correctly and abdicates his power of judgement, benumbed by his worldly problems around, he staggers under the crushing load of his own self-created miseries. This was the condition of the hero of the *Bhagavad Geeta,* and the educational treatment given to his malady constitutes the eighteen chapters of the *Geeta.*

It is said that the *Bhagavad Geeta* is a scripture in which, as in the *Upanishads,* there is a glorious teacher and a sincere taught. Here Lord Narayana himself is the teacher who is teaching, not a highly evolved student of the Upanishadic type, but an ordinary prince of the realm, Arjuna, an average man riddled with a thousand desires and anxieties as anyone of us.

It is possible that the *Geeta* is an Upanishadic talk between a Master Mind and an average man at the *Mahabharata* time. This conversation which is supposed to have taken place in Kurukshetra might have actually taken place in a different place and at a different period of time. Since we have not ourselves directly overheard it, we have to depend entirely upon the good sense of the reporter. Vyasa the ancient seer, recorded and incorporated it in the centre of his classical work, the *Mahabharata.* Vyasa, the father of the *Vedas,* who first collected, edited and published the Vedic-texts, and who thereafter gave us the dialectics of *Vedanta* in his *Brahma Sutras,* himself a great man of realization, was indeed very well fitted for this job.

In preparing the *Bhagavad Geeta* Vyasa did not milk his own creative intellect but has gone to the very source, our scriptures of knowledge, the *Upanishads.* Hence *Sreemad-Bhagavad-Geeta* has been considered an *Upanishad,* actually, each chapter in the *Geeta* is considered as an *Upanishad*, thus making the Divine Song a

compendium of 18 *Upanishads*, formed by the 18 chapters of the *Geeta*. These 18 chapters are called *Upanishads*, because these are declarations containing such deep significances that a hasty reader will surely miss their full import, unless he does long and intense meditation over the wealth of suggestive meaning that lies concealed behind each simple looking stanza. As in the *Upanishads*, here also we need the help of a truly qualified teacher who can train us in the art of opening the seven-hundred-and-one lockers (stanzas) in the treasure chamber of the *Geeta*.

Since the teacher has to point out to the common man a goal transcending the ordinary realms of experiences, he has to borrow his vocabulary from the ordinary language and present them, no doubt, strangely dressed up in special significances. Naturally, the obvious dictionary-meaning will not be a true guidance in digesting and assimilating the declarations of the scriptures. Therefore, a golden key, by which the scriptures can be opened and their divine knowledge brought out, was shaped by great Masters in the form of books which explain exhaustively the categories in *Vedanta*. Such volumes are called *Prakarana-books*.

Knowledge available in the world is found in books of two categories : (i) Text books of the Science, explaining the theory and technique, are called the *Sastras*, and (ii) books that explain the terms and terminologies used in the *Sastra* books, called the *Prakarana-books*. They explain the *Sastra*, but do not expound any original thought or ideal.

To help the Vedantic students, *Acharya* Shankara has fathered many such elementary text books, each having a distinct standard for itself. The most elementary text, meant for the beginners, is the "Tattwa-Bodha". The topics dealt within the "Tattwa-Bodha", are again elaborated, on a larger canvas, in the "Atma-Bodha". These very fundamental ideas are again discussed and more vividly brought out for us in his "Vivekachoodamani", wherein the eloquent philosophic ideas are made to spread in dazzling colours, upon the high walls and wide ceilings of the vast Palace of Knowledge.

An exquisite thinker, a brilliant intellect, a personality

scintillating with the vision of Truth, a heart throbbing with industrious faith and ardent desire to serve the humanity, sweetly emotional and relentlessly logical, in Shankara the *Upanishads* and the *Geeta* discovered the fittest spiritual General. He brought into his work his literary dexterity both in prose and poetry, and at his hands, under the heat of his fervent ideals, the great *Sanskrit* language became almost plastic

He could mould it into any shape and into any form. From vigorous prose, heavily laden with irresistible arguments, to flowing rivulets of tilting musical songs of love and beauty, there is no technique in language that Shankara did not take up ; and whatever medium he took up he proved himself to be a master in it. From masculine prose to feminine poetry, from marching verses to dancing musical words, be he in the halls of the *Upanishad* commentaries or in the temple of the *Brahma-Sutra* expositions or in the amphitheatre of his *Bhagavad Geeta* discourses, or in the open flowery fields of his devotional songs, his was a pen that danced itself to the rhythm of his heart, and to the song of his thoughts.

Acharya Shankara's compositions can be broadly divided into three sections ; A-*Bhashyas* (Commentaries), B-*Prakarana Granthas* (books dealing with the fundamental concepts of *Vedanta*), C-*Stotras* (Hymns and Meditation Verses). Shankara's *Bhashyas* are commentaries on the *Upanishads, the Bhagavad Geeta* and the *Brahma Sutras.* These three canonical works form the cornerstones on which the edifice of Hinduism stands. They are combinedly called the *Prastana-Trayee*, or the three great institutions.

"*Prastana*" means a scripture of authority. Hence '*Prastana-Traya*" means the three-fold authority in Hinduism. They are the *Upanishads*, the *Bhagavat Geeta* and the *Brahma Sutras*, the last two being the works of sage Badarayana otherwise known as Vyasa. The *Brahma Sutras* are also called the "*Vedanta Mimamsa*" and are an analysis of the contents of the *Upanishads*. This is also known as "*Sareerika Mimamsa*", because it deals with the *Atman*, the indweller inside the body. Shankara's *bhashyas* or commentaries on these serve us as a guide and as a golden key which unlocks for us the vast treasure-chambers of

wisdom contained in the Scriptures.

The Master par excellent that Shankara was, he did not stop at only culturing the intellect of his students and readers, but he carefully developed their hearts as well, through the voluminous devotional literature (the *Stotras*) which streamed out of his heart. It would not be correct to say that he 'composed' the hymns; they seem to have flowed out of his heart in a perennial stream of love, devotion and supreme knowledge. To Shankara prayer was no beggary. His hymns invariably consist of the prayer to grant the true light of knowledge and discrimination and redemption from the wheel of births and deaths, thus setting forth an ideal to be pursued by the students. For those who have already crossed over the boundaries of ritualistic religion, Shankara presented "boquets" of Meditation verses, (*Vedanta Stotras*) for regular recitation, reflection and meditation.

Bhagavadpada Acharya Shankara was not only a great thinker and noble Advaitic philosopher, but also an inspired champion of Hinduism and one of the most vigorous missionaries of his era. Such a powerful leader was needed at that time, when Hinduism had been almost broken up, and consequently, the decadent Hindu society had come to be disunited into numberless sects and denominations, each championing a different viewpoint and naturally quarrelling in endless argumentations. Each pundit had as it were, his own followers, his own philosophy, his own interpretation. Each one was a vehement and powerful opponent of all other views. This intellectual disintegration, especially in the scriptural field was never so serious and so dangerously calamitous as at the time prior to that of Shankara.

It was at such a time, when our society was fertile for any ideal or thought or practical philosophy to thrive, that the beautiful values of non-injury, self-control, love and affection of the Buddha came to enchant the kings and their subjects alike of this country. But the general decadence of the age did not spare the Buddhists also, and they among themselves precipitated different view points, and by the time Shankara appeared on the horizon of the Hindu history, the atheistic school of Buddhists (*Asad-Vadis*) had enticed away large sections of the Hindu folk.

Into such a chaotic intellectual atmosphere Shankara brought the life-giving philosophy of the Non-dual *Brahman* of the *Upanishads*. This philosophy of Shankara is sublime and unique. It is highly inspiring and elevating. The logic of his system of philosophy commanded acceptance from all great philosophers. Shankara thus made the edifice of Hindu Religion once again strong and sturdy by his scientific exposition of the Upanishadic Philosophy, so that today, *Sanatana Dharma*, can face even the challenges of modern science. Indian philosophy thus came to be identified ultimately with Shankara's *Adwaita Vedanta.*

The quintessence of Shankara's philosophy has been stated by himself in the following half a verse of his.

> "*Brahma Satyam Jagat Mithya*
> *Jeeva Brahmaiva napara*"

> "*Brahman*, the Absolute alone is real ; this world is unreal (*Maya*) ; and the *Jeeva* or the individual soul is not different from *Brahman*".

The Upanishadic terms "*Brahman*" and "*Atman*" indicate the highest Reality, which is non-dual (*Paramarthika*). The *Jeeva* or the individual ego is of a second order of Reality being the reflection of the supreme *Brahman* (*Pratibhasika Satta*), and the world has only a relative reality (*Vyavaharika Satta*). Shankara advocated *Vivarta-Vada*, the theory of phenomenal appearance of superimposition (*Adhyasa*).Just as a snake is superimposed on the rope in the twilight due tó delusion, this world and body are superimpositions on the substratum of *Brahman* or *Atman*, the Supreme Reality, due to ignorance (*Avidya*). If we get the knowledge of the rope, the illusion of the snake in the rope will vanish. Similarly, if we get the *knowledge* of *Brahman* or the Reality, the illusion of the *Jeeva* and *Jagat* will disappear. When false knowledge (*Mithya Jnana*) is removed by real knowledge of the Truth, the veil of ignorance (*Avidya*) will be destroyed and the *Jeeva*, the individual ego, will shine in its true, pristine, divine splendour and glory. Such a person (*Jeeva*) becomes a *Jeevan Mukta* or the Liberated One, who having broken up the bondages and limita-

tions experienced due to *Avidya* becomes the Immortal *Brahman*. This according to *Vedanta* is the goal and purpose of all Life and evolution.

2

The Message of Vedanta

Religion is the monopoly of man. It is concerned with the exercise of higher intelligence. Animals do not have any Religion, they represent a lower level of consciousness. They are guided by instinct and not by intelligence. The potentiality for the highest intellectual and spiritual growth that is inherent in man is totally absent in the animal. Even in meeting the challenges of day-to-day life the animal is far inferior to man. That is why animals have not progressed at all from their natural state. There is no civilization or culture for them. There is no difference between the animals of the Stone Age and those of the Atomic Age. Devoid of intelligence, the animals are not able to observe, learn and gather wisdom from experience.

This superior faculty of intelligence that distinguishes man from the animal, makes him dissatisfied with a mere lower existence *and creates in him an urge for a higher life. Intelligence ha*[s] given man mastery over Nature, inanimate and animate; in th[e] struggle for existence, he has asserted his domination over th[e] vegetable and animal kingdoms. He has arrogated to himsel[f] the title, the crown of Creation.

A knowledge of the physical laws and their practical application has enabled him to harness the titanic forces of Nature to the development of a wonderful scientific civilization that has increased the comforts and conveniences of life and improved the standard of living to an extraordinarily high degree. From this acme of material progress man finds that happiness has somehow eluded him. All his long struggle in the outer world has brought him to the realization that the oasis of worldly happiness is nothing but a mirage. All the wonderful achievements of his intellect that have given him power and wealth have not succeeded in giving him the most coveted treasure, the real and lasting happiness.

History reveals that mankind as a whole has not so far lived wisely. Though endowed with the potentialities of developing into good and wise men, the real ornaments of the Earth, men have misused their powers and converted the world into a Hell. It is the exercise of knowledge and power, unrestrained by the softening influence of a true philosophy of life that has caused misery in the world. The greatest of the scientists are becoming increasingly aware of this fact.

Modern civilization is now facing a crisis. The nations who are in the vanguard of this civilization are assiduously applying their woderful scientific knowledge to make worldly life more and more glorious and happy. The triumphs of technology have been marvellous and spectacular. New realms of knowlege are being unfolded day by day, but still there is no peace or happiness. The secret of happiness is even today a sealed book to the masters of science. The disaster of scientific knowledge divorced from moral principles has become a grave menace to the world and has earned for Science much dis-credit as a great curse.

The Machine Age is certainly making an honest effort to create a glorious world that can provide greater happiness for mankind. Indeed, superficially viewed, the present world is spectacular in its luxurious arrangements. But a cook alone cannot promise a happy dinner, though he can provide tasty dishes, unless the guests have a healthy appetite. The world of objects in itself is not life. Man living in the world and coming into contact with the available order of things, comes to experience

of life, because all the mental impediments that stand in the way of progress are the creations of an ego-centric life ; they are eliminated in the process of religious discipline. A universal renaissance of Religion will be a wholesome corrective to the errors and follies of a materialistic scientific civilization that has exalted knowledge and power, and ignored the saving wisdom of the Spirit. Life without Religion is like a rudderless boat on a tempestuous sea. The solvent for all miseries, in the world—individual, national or international—is the adoption of a religious life. If religion is re-established in the life of man, and if social and political relations are re-oriented in consonance with ethical and spiritual principles, then there opens the possibility of a terrestrial paradise in which the potentialities of science can be harnessed to remove all forms of misery.

The panacea for all the miseries of the world today, individual, national or international, is to be found only in the discipline of a true Religion and Philosophy of life. Fortunately for us, the *Rishis* who were the scientists of Life had carried on investigations into the mystery of existence, in their laboratories of introspection, the hermitages, with a greater perseverance and throughness than the modern masters of experimental science, and had perfected the Science and Art of Living which are of universal validity. While the modern scientists in their preoccupation with the tangible realities, shut their eyes to the intangible Reality, the *Rishis* in their all-comprehensive synthetic vision encompassed the permanent and impermanent, the tangible and the intangible in the varied landscape of life.

It is true that the *Rishis* chose a life of seclusion for pondering deeply over the mystery of Life. They did not want that the dust and din of competitive living should disturb the tranquillity of their contemplation; at the same time they did not shut their eyes to the cosmic drama enacted in the world around them with its tragic and comic scenes. These observations served the purpose of practical lessons in their researches on Life.

The general misconception that Religion is born in solitude and in the jungles and that it declares ideas and idealism which are not practical in the day-to-day world, is a shameless acceptance

of the ignorance of the people who make such hasty statements. The science of Living called Religion was born from life and it records man's attempts of discover a satisfactory solution for its day-to-day problems. In their experiments with Life, the *Rishis* did not run away from the challenging problems and actualities of life. On the other hand, they from their distant caves, as it were, observed more intimately and scientifically the workings of the human heart in the infinite variety of conditions and situations created by the ever-changing vicissitudes of life.

In their observations they found that life is nothing but a series of continuous experiences. An experience, therefore, becomes a unit of life just as a brick is the unit of a wall. The strength or weakness of a wall depends upon the quality and the texture of the bricks used in its construction. Similarly, experiences being the units of life, will determine the type of life led by an individual. If his experiences are happy his life will be happy, and if they are miserable he becomes miserable. Therefore, they concluded that the solution to the problems of life lay in streamlining the experiences, and the method by which this can be achieved is the content of all Religions.

Religion is not, therefore, an attempt at improving the conditions of the world, so that people may gain freedom from all wants and needs, thus enjoying a high "standard of living". But religion is that which imparts the "Art-of-living" by which each one discovers in oneself, the equipoise to stand up to life's situations, meeting efficiently the ever changing world of challenges

Religion is the art of living; it can be pursued under all circumstances and at all places, whether it be in your own house or in a factory or in the rice field. Only you must cultivate a habit to get an insight into the great philosophy and maintain a spiritual curiosity to understand its scientific conclusions. Check up the truth of these conclusions in your daily experiences and devotedly follow up these values of life that are admitted by your own inner understanding. By closely following up these methods with a clear and pure intellect, you will soon grow out of your inner weakness and become a better man to face your own problems in life.

On the other hand, modern Science, with its fundamentally materialistic outlook, directed all its investigations towards understanding the phenomena of external Nature. The modern scientists have therefore come to know more and more of the secrets of Nature, and their knowledge has, as they rightly claim, given man a mastery over the outer world.

But the great *Rishis* have asserted emphatically that even some knowledge of the inner spiritual constitution of man will give him mastery over his life. The attempt of the scriptural masters was, therefore, to analyse man who comes in contact with the world outside. They found out what the vehicles or instruments that constitute the "experiences of life" are, and how best they can all be controlled, purified and re-adjusted so as to bring forth more and more success and happiness into each one's life. This analysis is the secret content of the sacred text books of the Hindus or the Muslims or the Christians or the Buddhists or of any Religion in the world.

Religion is a great Science, and it has a glorious utility for the world. We are not talking of the Religion of bell ringing or light showing. We are talking of the Religion that helps one to discover in one's own within, a new strength and vitality to face one's own challenges in life, and of the science that provides a new inward courage of conviction to live honestly serving others. That which provides such a true and masterly living in the outer world is true religion in the strict sense of the term. Religion is a scientific re-evaluation of life; just as the scientists retire to their laboratories, the *Rishis* also retire to the cool and silent valleys of Himalayas to evaluate "life of man". The only difference is that the scientists take the outer world as their field of investigation, while the *Rishis* take their own inner world of experiences as the field of their search for truth. The scientists seek to understand what the world is, while the *Rishis* seek to discover what man is.

Thus, true Philosophy and Science are both based on life's experiences. Reason cannot start functioning in vacuum. The importance of experience has been emphasized more in the Indian Philosophy than in the Western Philosophy. In the Indian Philosophy *Advaita* has the unique distinction of having based itself

on the total experience of man—the three states of waking, dream and deep-sleep. Again let us consider modern scientific research as an example and see how does scientific research proceed. Science as a whole is based on innumerable hypotheses utilized, because they made it possible to get intelligible explanation of certain natural phenomena. Its laws and theories may need revision now and then as and when new data accumulates. Thus, science is a growing tradition, the present research being performed on the basis of validity and truthfulness of the past conclusions.

In the same manner, the Scripture (*Upanishads*) represent the experimental data gathered and conclusions arrived at by generations of sages, " the scientists of the spirit ". Their theories and conclusions have been confirmed as true by hundreds of mystics in every century all over the world for the past seven thousand years and more.

Religion is the technique of perfect living and of gaining a mastery over oneself. Religion is that secret process which brings forth an effective personality out of even a shattered man of despairs and disappointments.

On the other hand, the politicians, the economists and the scientists all over the world, in their totally extrovert considerations, come to the natural conclusion that the individuals are saved when the world has improved. Thus they have instituted daring experiments in political thoughts, have pursued heroic adventures in the economic fields and have accomplished spectacular achievements in Science. Politicians strive to bring concord into social life and maintain social law and order in the community. Economists conceive schemes and plans to increase the wealth of the nation and re-distribute it with equity and justice. The scientists, with a selfless dedication, continuously seek to discover means of exploring the rich treasures concealed within the folds of mother Nature, to explore sources of energy and to tame them in order to help the people make their life more comfortable, rich and luxurious. By creating such an order in society, by developing the tapped wealth of the nation through planned economy and by applying the knowledge of Science, materialism strives to raise the " standard of living " of the people.

It is obvious that the blessings of materialism can remove the agony of poverty, the sorrows of illness and the discomforts of a limited life in any under-developed community. But the philosophers unveil with convincing logic, that in spite of the high " standard of living" created for the community in a nation, man cannot feel happy in his ambitions. He cannot live contented in his relationships with others, even though he has plenty of food, clothing, shelter and all other amenities for a peaceful and efficient national life.

Had man been just an animal, he would not need anything more than physical comforts and security, but, as a highly evolved and developed psychological being, he wants emotional satisfaction, and being highly intellectual he is restless and impatient with all imperfections. He is not merely a physical structure consisting of his body; he has a mind and intellect. The materialistic needs of the body can satisfy only the physical man, which is only a third of an individual; two thirds of the individual is not taken into consideration when materialism strives to satisfy merely the basic needs in a community.

In short, when the modern world in its materialistic view point strives to bring about a high " standard of living " by improving the world around man, the deep thinkers of the scriptures and the rational philosophers conclusively indicate that the happiness and the glory of a community do not depend upon the " standard of living " but upon the " standard of life " the individuals come to live.

Materialism is wonderful, no doubt, but it burdens man with an endless anxiety and craving to possess more and more, to acquire and aggrandize and to live with slavish attachment. It is natural for man to seek his fulfilment and happiness only in thoughtless intemperance, in toiling for and reaching the temporary gratification of his physical passions, mental urges and intellectual hungers. Is it not a fact that, in recent times, more people are killed by worry than by work ? Man in his present misconceived civilization has learned to waste himself and his precious time in the inevitable trifles and tensions that beset his life.

Acquiring and spending, we lay waste our powers. Each of

us seeks the same goal. We all want nothing but unadulterated, unbroken, absolute Joy and Peace among the sensual objects that constitute the world of our waking state. Sensual objects have but a false "glitter" of joy about them. The joy soon fades away. At the loss of such joy, the worldly-blind seekers strive hard to multiply their capacity for purchasing more and more of the same fleeting joys.

In this perspiring struggle for earning and spending, the unhappy lot, driven from one desire to another by the same eternal universal urge to reach the state of perfection, gets exhausted, becomes sad and disappointed, and, amidst the growing uproar of a thousand unsatisfied yearning within, one day leaves the physical sheath—the vehicle for the enjoyment of their waking state world. What a painful, cruel and pitiable end !

If peace and joy be the goal of every living being's day-to-day struggles, it is quite natural that you have come to ask "What is Peace ?" Surely you must have realized that the question is not about any phenomenon in Nature outside, where laboratory experiments and visual or factual representations could [illegible] understanding. The question is essentially a subjective [illegible] into a State of Satisfaction felt within and lived by the [illegible] with or without reference to the external circumstances [illegible] visible world outside By Peace, we mean a mental [illegible] the subject, lived by him and recognized as such [illegible] sorrowless silence in his own within. Therefore [illegible] can be conducted only by looking within and observing [illegible] ings and occurances therein during the various [illegible]

In short, self-analysis and introspection [illegible] of all philosophical enquiries into self-[illegible] perfect means of achieving a true vital [illegible] the values respected in life are one of [illegible] sensual demands, attention gets [illegible] chaos within cannot be ended. We [illegible] stand the entire inner processes [illegible] These are no blind theories. They [illegible] of successful masters and are [illegible] truths by the very one behind [illegible]

We can see that in everyone of us there are, at any given moment, a hundred desires struggling to seek their fulfilment. In those rare lucky ones among us, who gain in life at least a seeming fulfilment of some of their desires, we observe how each fulfilment is but the breeding ground for a dozen other complementary desires—each an attempt to complete the imperfections of the phantom joy achieved !

Let us analyse a single desire and observe what exactly happens within us. " If only I had a son " is the beginning of an entire unending chain of life-long self-tortures. The man wishing for a son feels that all the available circumstances in his life do not serve his conception of the " Full " or " Complete " Joy, and do not therefore give him that " texture" of joy or peace which is his demand of life. His solution slowly gets crystallized in his vague " desire " that "My son would complete my joy". His desire is thus an unconscious effort on his part to have a fuller expression of himself.

The desire for a son at its very beginning is but a localised disturbance in the mental lake. But a million ringlets of concentric disturbance follow, and the widening ripples of thought come to splash upon the vast banks ! The "desire " motivates an endless array of " thoughts "; thoughts thus motivated by each " desire " get projected out into the waking-state-world, and among its sense objects they manifest as " actions ". Successful " actions " end in their desired fruit—which is but the objectification of the subjective desire.

The desire for a son produces the agitating problem whether to marry or not, and if the decision is in the affirmative, the questions whom and where crop up. As though by magic, at each leisure moment a million castles-in-the-air spring up to paint in the void the would-be-life together as man and wife in circumstances having such and such description—beauty, comforts, conveniences etc., etc. The thoughts feed the " desire ", the " desire " vitalizes each flimsy dream. In a short time the consequent chaos creates a hell, a roaring inferno within.

The individual, tortured by his own "thought", cannot contain

himself within His own "thoughts", as they gain vitality from his "desire" soon make him their slave. When these "thoughts" find their expression, there happen the seeking, the meeting, the talk, the transaction, the procession and the wedding! Mentally strained and physically exhausted, the fellow and his tame frightened bride hurry through the usual lusty processes to breed! The desire for a son, which caused the inner whirl-wind, dragging him through a distance of sweat and blood, at last condemns him to the thorny fields of fatherhood. "Ah! My son! He has arrived! My sweet son! My great son!"

All joy, but alas! only for a fleeting moment!! The joy is immediately followed by his constant run for the milk-powder and feeding-bottle, the doctor, the tailor, the nurse and the chemist! Soon the individual is shuttled between the toyshops and the home, the school and theatre, the book-shops, the job givers etc. Everyday that very thing-of-joy, the "My son", provides for the father a hundred hopes, fears, plans, failures, disappointments and sorrows.

"But, at least in that sacred moment, when he cried out 'My son' don't you think he had a taste of some joy?" If one is tempted to ask thus, one is perfectly right. Hence it is that we, in the very beginning, admitted that the sense-objects do provide joy, *but it is only a false "glitter" of joy.*

"If there be any joy-content at all in the sense-objects, why not we *arrest* the moment of our experiencing it and prolong it to any desired length of time?" ask some aspirants Let us patiently continue our enquiry; probably we may come to discover the very Secret of Permanent Joy

So far we have observed how the desire for a son caused a storm of thoughts, how they manifested in the world outside as "actions" and how the "desire" for a son had objectified, as it were, for the happy father. The father at the birth of his child feels extremely happy. Why? Let us find out what happens exactly within him the moment he knows that his desire for a son has been fulfilled; say, at the moment of the last rending cry of the mother or the first cry of the child or at that inspiring moment

when a foot-long tender thing placed between folds of cloth, is laid in the father's lap. The inner ripples or agitation suddenly settle down.

The thought-disturbances caused on the score of the desire sink down ; for a *split* moment the mental stuff in its liquid limpid clearness reflects the glory within—" Ah ! The joy ! " But the next moment it is gone ! Why ? A thousand other desires regarding the son and his comforts, the mother and her health, the nurse and her conveniences, all come up to disturb the glory-reflecting medium, the stilled mind.

So then, the mind is at once the breeding ground of desires, the dung-heap of contending thoughts and also the glorious Castle of Perfect Joy! When the mind is stilled, when it ceases erupting its scorching lava of " thoughts ", peace is the subjective experience of the possessor of the thoughtless mind. Peace is joy. This is why, in peaceful dreamless sleep, every living creature feels nothing but joy.

From what we have so far observed it can be inferred that the " joy-in-son " was not in the son, but in the particular condition within, which the birth of the son occasioned. So then, the source of joy is not in the external world of objects but is deep within us only. Whenever the mind is at perfect rest, effulgent flood of the inner Bliss pours out its satisfying joy.

The desire for objects creates disturbances, which shatter our real nature of *Shanti*, Peace. The struggle and the urgency of the individual to get his desire fulfilled represent the urge of truth to assert itself. The Spirit within is asserting to come back to its normal state of fulness. The tension in the bow string is from the consistent pull of the stem of the bow to regain its straight nature. The tension of life and its pains are from the benign pull of the Truth upon untruth !

We have thus discovered that " desire " breeds " thoughts " and " thoughts " propel us to " actions ", when the " actions " end in " successful fruition ", the result is the calming of the thought-storm which in its turn produces the feeling of joy and peace in the subject. Hence the conclusion is self-evident : the solution for

all the sorrows of life now becomes an open secret. Renounce desire—thoughts will end. When the desire agitations are hushed up, Eternal Peace is the experience. This experiencing of the all-full-satisfaction and contentment, which is independent of the external world and the day-to-day circumstances created around *the subject by the world of objects and the living* conditions, is the perfect, achievable and to-be-achieved goal of life.

Once having, fully and vitally, intensely and vividly *lived* (not merely heard or even intellectually come to appreciate), this desireless *state* of Perfect Bliss *in one's own experience, thereafter the* world and its fleeting, illusory joys cannot evoke any response at all from the Saint, the *Jivanmukta*, the liberated in life. Through all experiences, be it joy or sorrow, honour or dishonour, peace or war, health or disease, heat or cold, ever well poised equally in all pairs-of-opposites, He, the *Mahatma*, God-like, lives on, as an Immortal among the mortals.

Such an individual, who always finds his own level in spite of the fact that he is living amidst the sense-objects, is called a Man-of-perfection, a true Saint. Lord Krishna, in the *Geeta*, asserts that such an individual alone can truly discover peace and happiness in himself. Not satisfied with this negative assertion, the Lord, positively denies any true peace or joy to those who are "desirers of desires".

> *** He attains Peace into whom all desires enter as waters enter the ocean, which, filled from all sides, remains unmoved ; but not the "desirer of desires".**

This idea is totally opposed to the modern belief in the material world. *The materialists believe that by fanning up their desires* and satisfying as many of them as possible, one is helped to live a life of joy and happiness. Modern civilization, based upon industrialisation and large-scale production, is attempting to step up desires, and this attempt has now succeeded to such an extent that

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* आपूर्यमाणमचलप्रतिष्ठं समुद्रमापः प्रविशन्ति यद्वत् ।
तद्वत्कामा यं प्रविशन्ति सर्वे स शान्तिमाप्नोति न कामकामी ॥
(Ge. Ch. II-70)

the average man has a million times more desires today than his fore-fathers ever had entertained a century ago. The financiers and the industrialists, with the aid of modern scientific knowledge, struggle hard to discover and to satisfy new desires ; and to the extent an individual comes to fulfil his newly-created desires, he is taught by the day's civilization that he is more happy than ever before.

On the other hand, the great thinkers of the past in India, through their experience or through their careful and exhaustive thinking, discovered that the joy created through satisfaction of desires could never be complete. They discovered that the joy or the happiness, at any given time, is the (fraction) *quotient* obtained when the number of desires fulfilled is divided by the total number of desires entertained by the same individual at that time. This mathematical formula has been accepted by the modern preachers of secularism also ; but in their practical application, the old *Rishis* and the modern politicians differ to a large extent.

In the modern world, the attempt is to increase the numerator which is represented by the " number of desires fulfilled ". The Scriptural Masters of ancient India also were living in a world peopled by a society of men, and their philosophical contemplations were upon man as a social being, and their aim too was to bring more happiness into their society. But unlike the present prophets of profit, these *Rishis* of Religion did not conceive that an attempt to increase the *numerator* without a corresponding attention upon the rate of increase of the *denominator*, could produce any palpable increase in joy. On the other hand, today, we are struggling hard to increase the " number of desires fulfilled " without at the same time trying to control the " number of desires entertained ". Such a state of affairs cannot produce any palpable increase in the *quotient of happiness* is the scriptural verdict, and this is an easily understandable scientific truth.

The " desirer of desires " can never come to perfect peace (*Shanti*). Only he who has in a spirit of detachment gained a complete control over his mind, so that the sense-objects of the outer world cannot create in him an infinite number of yearnings or desires, is the Man-of-Peace-and-Joy. The objects of the outer

world cannot themselves tease a man either by their existence, or by their non-existence. The outer world can borrow its capacity to ill-treat man only when he exposes himself unguardedly and gets wounded and crushed by his own attachments to a wrong valuation of the sense-objects

It is true no doubt, that the world-of-objects remain, function and play their frolics according to a Law over which we have absolutely no control. But objects must come in contact with our mind in order to produce the reaction, and that alone is the seed of our experience. So then, if we can control, train and culture our minds in a way that they can only react positively to any sets of objects and under any set of cirucmstances, then, our reactions would all be positive. Happiness and peace is his who has thus trained his mind to react "positively" to the world outside.

The world which we experience is but a large assortment of different forms, sounds, tastes, smells and touches. These sense-impulses are reported by the sense organs to the mind and it, in consultation with the intellect, comes to certain "opinions". These are arrived at generally by comparing the present with similar or dissimilar experiences that were lived by it previously, the impressions of which were carefully stored up by it, for purposes of ready reference, in our memory, each one labelled as good or bad, joy or sorrow, pain or pleasure, love or hatred etc. In the language of philosophy, these are called the *Pairs or Dvandvas.*

Being a victim of these *Dvandvas*, not knowing himself to be under this tyrant, almost licking the very hand that whips, weeping and suffering, this worldly man, the sad, helpless *Samsarin* labours through a life of struggles and disappointment.

It is common knowledge that when the subject comes in contact with the objects, it reacts to the "challenges" and produces its varied experiences–the *Dvandvas*. Evidently the same objects can provide entirely different experiences when the "mood" or condition of the subject is altered.

Thus, even when your only son comes with his childish pranks to disturb you at an urgent and absorbing work, he is as much a

nuisance to you as the twentieth sweet set before you for your consumption ! That which was a pleasure in winter becomes a torture in summer. What was a joy in youth is a regret in old age. Thus, it is proved that the same set of objects and conditions provide varying types of experiences, each depending upon the fleeting hour's immediate "mood" of the subject.

The worldly man hunting after joy, among the confusions of an ever-changing subject and his "moods" and hustling to equate it with the equally unpredictable changes in the objects and their conditions, comes to grief. Not even the most skilled of acrobats can maintain his equilibrium unbroken at once over two wild horses ! The endless attempt to solve the everchanging subject-object puzzle is the secret ulcer that condemns the *Samsarin* to a life of agonizing pain.

The subject-object puzzle can remain a real challenging conundrum only to the one who, in his present ignorance of its "solution", is dancing in vain to set himself in step with an ever-changing set of factors such as the multiple sense-objects, the fickle circumstances, the shooting desires, the endless thirsts, etc., of the outer life. In fact, the failures and sufferings of man are entirely due to the defects in the methods by which he tries to carry on the business of life.

The only method that can give a permanent solution to the "problem" is by fixing at least one side of the equation as a constant factor. This is exactly the message of *Vedanta*. The seeker, even during his early days of practice, through correct, discrimination is helped to come to the right understanding that the subject within him, who seems to experience the changing vicissitudes, is a false entity and that an equally false world-of-objects seems to keep on dancing to a purposeless rhythm of change !

The false subject is the conception of "I' as "Mr. so-and-so". This self imposed arrogator, "I", is a false entity, a mere thought bundle—the mind. If once we accept that conclusion that the pains and mortality are all for the mind, "I", and that the sense objects can inject their burning venom of greed and passions only when the mind is *turned* towards them, we have then

discovered the specific for the cancer of life. Had the waking world and its enchantments been eternally true and their effects on the individual absolute and real, then, even during our deep-sleep-state we ought to have had at least an inkling of their presence. But, as it is, no man can complain that he had no joy or peace during his sleep, because his Racehorse had gone lame the evening before! If he has really suffered in bed, surely, it only means that he had no *deep* sleep that night, for, no pain or regret has entrance into the Hall of Deep Slumber.

The great thinkers of Indian philosophy have brought to bear upon this line of enquiry their extraordinary analytical acumen and their vivid intuitional experiences. They have come to observe that in deep sleep even the most intimate of emotions and the deepest of memories are entirely shut off from the sleeper's cognitive experience; and as the individual enters the plane of the waking state, there is a sudden bursting forth of his entire past memories of sense-experience he had lived, which include things he had felt, seen, heard, touched, smelt and tasted.

What conclusions do logically proceed from the above observation? The knowledge of the *Jagat*—which includes outer sense-objects and inner thoughts—and of the memories of such knowledge gained in the past, are indeed merely the tricky functions of the mind. Where the mind is, there the *Jagat*, the waking state world *is*: where the mind is not, as in deep-sleep, the *Jagat is not*.

So then, to gain freedom from the tyrannical life-long persecutions of the boneless phantom, the Lord of Tears, what man has to do is only to *understand* that his enemy is but an illusion of his own mind and then to train himself to calm down from the dreadful emotions which the mental mistake has caused!

Vedanta is never tired of repeating that the world in which men suffer and weep has only as much reality and capacity to give pain as the snake-bite which the wayfarer *thought* he experienced when the stepped on a harmless rope. The "snake" was but a mental illusion of the individual born in his ignorance of the rope. The pains of the sufferer are indeed poignantly true for him; but the next pilgrim stepping on the same rope passes on

his way care-free and happy, because his torch had lit the rope for him ! Naturally, it is not the rope that gave the false pains to the ignorant; the pain was the result of his ignorance. *Ignorance is removable by knowledge.*

Just like the serpent-in-rope we have a world of pain, a mere illusory mental projection, daily to reckon with hot tears and sighs. The cause of pain in life is, therefore, in the false belief that the *Jagat* is real and permanent. This false belief has risen from the womb of our own ignorance of the "*Jagat*", of ourselves and of God. *Ignorance is removed by knowledge.*

Deep and steady enquiry into the nature of "*Jagat*", "God" and the subjective "I", constitutes in all, the enduring and noble pursuit of self-perfection. The life lived after the acqusition of the true knowledge about the inevitably poignant, but at the same time delusory, factors of life and thereby training oneself to an evidently cheerful, ever-in-peace existence through the rest of the days in the present embodiment, is Divine life. And the perfection thus achieved in which the victor comes to live Eternal Bliss, is the Life Divine, a destination which if once reached, completely removes all the wrecking problems, ills and pains of life, and gives one complete, eternal and all-perfect Bliss-experience.

To the question "is this possible ?" the answer is now unmistakably self-evident. There is a misunderstanding in us about the true nature of the world of experience, the *Jagat*. We know not that the objects we crave to have and toil to acquire have no more any objective reality than the "snake" of the rope. The objects and their capacities to give us joy or pain are all our own mental super-impositions. In deep sleep, when the mind ceases to function, where are the objects of the world or their charms, or their plurality ? What happens then to the pains of bereavements or the joys of successes ? When the mind functions, the outer world flare up with its entire burden of imperfections, limitations, decay and death. When the mind is at rest, the world dissolves into nothingness.

The mind being the instrument of our cognizing things that are "not" in both the waking and the dream states, remedy lies in the perfect control of the mind through a steady re-education

of it. The mind is to be controlled in its freedom to roam about as it likes among the sense-objects seeking after joy and satisfaction, and is to be re-educated to renounce its false fears, fantastic desires, illusory sorrows and fancied joys. In short, the mind is trained through deligent practice and correct thinking to *recognize* the perceived as unreal as the twilight ghost "seen" in a wayside lamp-post. This then is the "solution" for the stupendous conundrum of life, and this is achieved by living the Life Divine.

The path is doubtless found to be rugged and dusty, but it is so only in the early stretches The journey ends in a dancing, brilliant and eternal spring of sweet scented love, of elevating tolerance, of golden satisfaction, of perfect equilibrium and of abiding peace. And yet a spiritual aspirant may, in confusion and doubt, wait long at the golden gate of the Life Divine not daring to enter. He knows not that the Life Divine is an open park; anyone can walk in at any time, stretch himself fully upon its cushioned turf laid so lavishly around the fountain of Beauty and Peace.

Spiritual life need not be in thick forests, in some lonely caves, nor need it be only for certain extraordinary men of special qualifications. It is not achieved by suddenly running away from the world nor by living a beggarly life of idleness in some remote Himalayan valley. The aspirant of Divine Life need not change his clothes nor add some crude marks on his forehead nor for hours together daily stand in the hot sun ! Shaving the head or keeping the *Jata,* keeping a begging bowl or throwing away one's cloths or sitting on a bed of nails or sleeping on skins — external shows have no meaning to the real *devotee*; nor are they by themselves a true or necessary sign of a freed soul. Spiritual life is not dependent, except to a very negligible extent, on the place you live, or the clothes you wear, or the manner you stand or the condition in which you keep the hair upon your head. Neither the nature of the vessels you keep nor the conditions of the mattress you sleep on, has a *bearing* upon your *spiritual state ! Spiritual life is Life Divine* and there is only one way of attaining it —*Living* a Divine Life.

Worldly life is a continuous experiencing of limitations, pains and sorrows, now and then thrilled by a false intoxicating waft of some fleeting joy from the sense-objects. Spir'tual life is a continuous

attempt to live the Divine Life, with a full realization of its scope and values wherein the aspirant is now and then encouraged by fleeting glimpses of the real, dynamic bliss—God.

The Life Divine is an Eternal experience by itself, the individualized ego always finding comfort in it and reaching out to merge in the Truth. It is the supreme *be-ness*, the Goal, the End.

In the Life Divine the ego (*Jiva*) finds himself to be already that which he wished to become. There, in that State of Perfection, there is nothing that he has not ; there all desires are fulfilled. Once there, he is no more under the tyranny of his mortal limitations. Beyond Time, Space and Causality, beyond death and disease, above hopes and desires, in eternal fulness of Bliss, he finds himself " the all ". This then, is clearly not a becoming — he merely regains his true Nature —*Shivoham* — by an intuitive *cognition* of the Self in him.

Lying all the time in a mass of rock, and visible only to the transcending vision of the sculptor, is the graceful form with its divine proportions ; the artist alone can bring this hidden beauty out of the ugly mass of rock. He has the subtle intuition to see the glory and the perfection of the secret form within. His attention fixed upon this beauty, imperceptible to the ordinary eye, what he does is only to strip the rock of the outer gross portions which conceal so much beauty. At last it is done ; the finished product emerges in all its perfection. The artist has added nothing of his own to bring about or highten the beauty. The beauty *was* throbbing in the secret womb of the rock ; the sculptor has only released it from the encircling mass of ugliness.

Man does not realize how gross, sensuous and passionate he looks as he lives his worldly life, his eyes ever ready to overflow with tears from the smart of suffering, his brow ploughed with discontent and perpetually sweating with his exertions in fighting against his own individual imperfections ! And yet, the Eternal Self, the Beauty of Beauties, God, the Omnipotent and Omniscient, lies deep within him though shrouded by layers of ignorance. To remove this veiling ignorance is to secure the nearness to God, which is to *recognize* our essential Nature—The God-head.

The worldly life is led in agony and sorrow, by the deluded *Jeeva* (ego) distorted to frightening ugliness by its own ever-present dread of an ever-threatening calamity — Death. The Life Divine is experienced in joy and bliss by a *Jnani,* ever resplendent with *his life-giving wisdom, through which he finds again his Shiva Swarupa,* the God-head. The Divine Life is the chiselling process by which the enveloping mass of ugly matter is chipped off and the Vital Truth is brought out to fulfil itself in its own voiceless glory ! By living the Divine Life one realizes the Life Divine.

In short, Divine Life is the technique of self-perfection ; to strive for the Life Divine is the highest of all conscious efforts man is capable of. No other sentient being in the universe has the equipment for thus hastening its own evolution so efficiently Man alone has. If Man with all the wealth of his available apparatus does not learn to spend his life in striving for the God-head of Perfection, indeed his is a life wasted !

Every action of an individual in the outer world is but an attempt to express himself more fully. Every yearning and strife, every desire and action and every thought and word is only an unconscious effort to regain his state of fullness. The trouble is that the phenomenal world of finite things and beings is not the field to seek the Infinite ; so he never obtains satisfaction which he daily seeks in vain — the Eternal Infinite alone is capable of satisfying Man, because the Infinite alone is Bliss Eternal.

This Infinite is our true Nature. We have only to realize this to find ourselves at our journey's End ! All wordly actions individually or collectively, among men or animals or plants, have the same motive and aim—to escape from pain and achieve bliss. From the suckling child to the international warring chieftains, from the dog under the chair in the drawing room to the roaring lion in the African forests, from the tiniest fungus to the giant oaks, every movement, physical or mental, is directed towards getting rid of pain and gaining happiness.

So universal is this instinctive dread of pain that even great thinkers have missed the mark and failed to note its obvious message!

In this *Revolt against Pain* lies the clear declaration that Bliss alone is Truth, Bliss alone is Real and Bliss alone is the Nature of the Universe. The ocean is nothing but water, and the mountainous waves, the dancing froth and the glittering foam, the sparkling ripples and the flickering bubbles are all merely its various names and forms, having for themselves no separate individuality ; so too, the multiplicity of things and beings we observe in the universe, is merely so many different names and forms of the one and the same thing ; in essence, they are all the same essential Nature of Bliss.

God is Bliss. God resides in all. The Bliss aspect in Thee is *Shiva*, and *Shiva art Thou.* To consider yourself as a separate individaul, Mister so-and-so, is as foolish as it is for each billowing wave to consider itself separate from the ocean. It is in this separative ego that the *Jeeva* is born. The *Jeeva* it is that suffers. The Mister so-and-so is the mortal bound by his wishes and desires and tortured by pains and sorrows. Choke the " I "-ness in you, and you will have already taken a substantial step towards freeing yourself from your bondages and realizing the fullness of your true stature " Bliss am I "—' Immortal am I "— " God am I ".

This *recognition* of the Self is the crowning victory in life. This is *Iswara Darsan*—the Vision of God. With this realization the saint has reached the God-head. Thereafter the outer worldly circumstances of sorrow or joy, insult or respect, failure or success, heat or cold, fasting or feasting, hatred or love, poverty or riches, disaster or progress—none can touch him. He is above all circumstances. He is no more a victim of the external, but is ever rooted in his wisdom of the Inner Essence. He becomes a calm witness of the universe, as if it were a mere temporary disturbance within himself ! !

On the contrary the self-arrogating ego-centres viewing out of themselves through the shattering instruments of their mind and intellect, observe everywhere nothing more sacred than an eternal variety of endless plurality. Consequently, they suffer all the pains of life, their own self-created problems of life. The mind-and-intellect has the effect of a prism. Therefore the wise, transcending the limitations of both their mind and intellect, learn to look out through their faculty called intuition. Intuitively viewed, Self

alone is the experience available at all places, and at all times.

The Self is the source of the Light which, at the interception of the mental prism, seemingly disperses Itself into the variegated band of the innumerable names and forms, which constitute the *Jagat*. The *Yogi* in his discriminating wisdom, successfully withdraws his mind's delusory hobnobbing with its own ignorance-created plurality and comes to be aware of his own Self as the reality behind the entire world of plurality.

This is the moment of Supreme Wisdom and Bliss, and in order to enjoy this experience, the individual must necessarily be a highly evolved soul. Such ones alone can come to enjoy Eternal Bliss. That theirs alone is the experience of continued, unbroken and infinite joy is the emphatic assertion of the *Upanishads.*

> *** (That) One (supreme) Ruler, the soul of all beings, who makes His one form manifold......those wise men, who perceive Him as existing in their own self, to them belongs Eternal Happiness and to none else.**

> **** He, the Eternal among the non-eternals, the Intelligence in the intelligent, who, though one, fulfils the desires of many· ....those wise men who perceive Him in their own Self, to them belongs Eternal Peace and to none else.**

That the One, who is Eternal and of the nature of Pure Intelligence and Bliss and who is the very Force behind the immutable law of cause and effect, is not a mere transcendental Vitality-Divine who reigns somewhere in the heavens like a mortal king or the president of a country dwelling in the capital far away from the

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* एको वशी सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा एकं रूपं बहुधा यः करोति ।
तमात्मस्थं येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरास्तेषां सुखं शाश्वतं नेतरेषां ॥

(Kat. Up., Sec. V–12)

** नित्योऽनित्यानां चेतनश्चेतनानामेको बहूनां यो विदधाति कामान् ।
तमात्मस्थं येऽनुपश्यन्ति धीरास्तेषां शान्तिः शाश्वती नेतरेषाम्

(Kat. Up., Sec. V–13)

villages, is the message of *Vedanta*. This declaration of the *Rishis*, who plunged into the very womb of life to scoop it and discover for themselves the palpitating soul of one's own life, the true seat of all activities, the Permanent and Eternal Factor behind the ever-changing madness called *Jagat* (world), is the highest achievement of man's wisdom.

This is the Blissful Goal, the eternal achievement of Man in Divine life. Soon after this voiceless Divine-experience the mortal rises to become a God indeed, immortal among men. In him are the *Vedas* accomplished. In him is life vindicated. In him is to be found the destination of all evolution ! His alone is the perfect pure Life Divine.

A *Jnani* who has thus come to experience God in Himself, knows thereafter no sorrow. His is an experience of endless Bliss ; his is an attitude of perfect detachment from " life's fitful fever ". Even if his body be living and subject to phenomenal conditions of illness and decay, which may strike an ordinary superficial observer as utterly miserable and extremely unhappy, the Saint, living, as he does, entirely in his own inner True Nature of '"Shivoham" (Auspiciousness), recognizes nothing but the ultimate joy of God-hood.

Once the *Jiva* is thus tuned to perfection, it finds full contentment and bliss in itself, and the cravings, desires, lusts and passions which had caused the illusory pains in life, now roll off. The Self, grounded in the Self of All, lives in its native harmony and peace, and the individual, renouncing entirely his sense of false ego that he is Mister So-and-so comes to experience his real nature and status as God-hood.

3

The logic of Spiritual Life

Religion is not a bundle of superstitions to be fumigated at regular intervals with incense and candle-sticks, but, when carefully analysed, it is a definite science of Life giving a complete technique of practical living By faithfully adhering to its precepts and following its practical suggestions, man can make himself happier and this world a better place to live in.

Life is a series of experiences. The experiencer comes in contact with the world of objects and ekes out for himself pleasure or pain, joy or sorrow and failure or success. His reactions are dependent upon the quality and texture of his mind and intellect equipment. There is an infinite variety in the texture and composition of the equipment, varying from individual to individual. Each individual looks at the world in and through the medium of his own inner equipment and gains the particular vision envisaged by it. Thus, the world provides different and distinct visions according as the equipment of the individual who projects them.

Analysing a few examples, we find that to the scientist, the world appears to be a field of magnificent phenomena of the dis-

covered and the undiscovered and of great power and potentialities ; to a peasant in a remote village, the same world is insignificant with nothing spectacular about it. Again, to a poet, the world is a manifestation of nature in luxurious and extravagent beauty, and he sees in it everywhere an expression of Divinity. The same world is viewed by a pessimist as an inferno of misfortunes and tragedies. Hence, the objects remaining the same, the experiences differ from man to man, and the reactions gained by them depend upon the constitution of their equipment.

The world, therefore, has no precise and clear cut difinition. The pattern changes as in a kaleidoscope, according to individual vision. As for instance, a man wearing blue glasses sees the world blue ; upon changing them to green, he sees the world green. Realizing this truth, the religious Masters advised man to reform and reconstruct his inner instruments of experience so that the world can be interpreted by them in its true perspective.

Nevertheless man in his innocence, still believes in the development and beautification of the external world more than in the rehabilitation of his inner personality ; consequently, there has arisen three types of workers who have been sincerely serving mankind making this world a better place to live in. They are the Economists, the Politicians and the Scientists.

The economists provide more wealth and material prosperity for the people. The politicians deal with the people and improve the pattern of mutual and co-operative living. The scientists harness and tame nature for man to enjoy it. Thus the economists, the politicians and the scientists have achieved wonderful things right in our own time for our own happiness and for the happiness of the society. Therefore are we grateful to them !

Now if we were to meet these prophets of our age, one by one, each of them would admit privately that his had been a waste of noble energies ! Not that their plans, ideas and discoveries were in themselves glorious mistakes. The political visions and programmes are well based upon historical experiences of the past. The economic schemes and plans are indeed the fruits of great study and deep ponderings. The scientists, no doubt, have been very creative ;

they have wrested out of Nature many of her splendid secrets. But, they all cry, " we strive, but somehow we find we cannot bring blessing to society, because the society in its present state is incapable of receiving the blessings we shower ".

How does society become unfit for the blessings ? Why is it, that man is failing, inspite of such mighty intellects constantly working to make him happy ? Now, therefore, we will have to enquire a little more deep to discover where exactly the seat of this ruinous disease is ?

Men in today's society live ever in a state of tension, in a state of withering discord among themselves, each shattered within himself. Ever agitated and restless in their minds, ever unsatisfied with what is available in society and ever striving and trying to cut the throats of one another, all of them always feel inspite of all that they have, a sense of insecurity in life. Each one tries to build a wall of safety for himself with money, possessions, power, strength, and social laws. Why this sad plight ? Is there no escape, no remedy ? Should life be ever a groping in the dark, a wasteland of strifes with no reward of peace and true joy ? Should there not be full contentment of love and unreserved affection ?

When we analyse this question as true critics of life, not as pessimists judging society as doomed, but standing apart as intelligent and kind critics, lovingly criticizing life, we have to ask the question, " Where exactly is the flaw "? *Vedanta* or the Philosophy of India roars, " Man! try not to understand the world exclusively but try to understand the world in relation with you. Because you alone are the object that is available for complete study, you can observe and fully investigate you-in-the-world. Thus understand the world through you, rather than objectively looking at the world ignoring yourself. This is quite right as life is possible only when man is in relationship with the world.

Let us for a moment consider what exactly the politician, the economist and the scientist achieve for the world. Politicians order my *relationship* with the people around me ; the economists regulate my *relationship* with the wealth in the country ; and the scientists command my *relationship* with the phenomena that

constitute the world about me. Thus, everywhere, I am being educated in how to relate myself with the world so that I may come to live harmoniously with the life in the community. In this there are naturally two factors—the world and me. The happenings around me and the nature of the world that lies about me, are at present not directly under my control, but, in case I can re-organize myself within myself by myself, I may then gain a glorious and healthy harmony with the world in which I happen to live now.

The scientists, the economists and the politicians can only tell us the correct *relationship* with which *we* must live in the society with social wealth and phenomenal energies. But in all patterns of *relationships* we have to be healthy and intelligent in order to maintain the right *relationship*. If man is not rightly educated, however much the politician, the scientist and economist might strive to bless the society, the society can never be blessed.

It is thus clear now that I am the one who must keep an intelligent relationship with the world around. If I don't keep an intelligent relationship with the world outside, I am considered either drunk or mad. A drunkard can never keep proper relationship with the world outside ; he becomes a nuisance to the society. A lunatic will not know how to maintain proper relationship with others ; he makes himself unhappy and he makes everybody around him also unhappy.

Therefore, the main emphasis of religion and philosophy is on Man, to make him competent to face his environments. The spiritual scientists, the subjective scientists, strive to tune up and strengthen the personality of man, so that he may be competent in himself to face his own challenges in life. In fact life is not merely because of the environment ; nor can man have any " life " in the sense we know it today — by " life " we mean the joys and sorrows of existence — unless there is for him an appropriate environment.

When man comes in contact with the environment, there then arise in him his experiences of joys and sorrows. In this, the external environment keeps on constantly changing ; it is, no doubt, to some extent controlled, regulated and improved upon by the material

scientists, politicians and economists. But however conducive the political arrangement may be, whether it be socialistic or communistic whether it be capitalistic or democratic, in any condition of poverty or riches, it is you and I individually who will have to face our life. Sorrows and tragedies, no economist or politician can take away from us. Happiness or unhappiness depeds upon our interpretation of the world in which we are living. They may try to improve the world, they may try to adjust it beautifully, but after all, who else will face our own challenges other than we ourselves ?

In this business of living, religion and philosophy say that each individual is compelled until death to face his own challenges. You may say we are all of one society, we are all of one race, or that we belong to one country or one community. Yet each reacts differently to the same environment. Even in your own homes you do realize that as a father you have to face certain things yourself ; you cannot share many of your problems even with your own wife ; your wife has her own problems which she cannot share with you ; your little baby lying between you two has its own private problems. In short, every individual will have to face his own problems. If I am ill, the society may provide a beautiful hospital and the best of doctors to attend on me. All my friends may come and cheer me up. Still, I will have to be in my painful bed all alone. I alone have to face my own trouble.

How to make man healthier in himself so that he comes to feel competent to meet his own challenges — this is the problem that philosophy tries to tackle ; towards the same end religion also tries to provide a field in which each can train himself to grow in knowledge and inner strength As a technique of self-improvement religion and philosophy provide certain exercises by which each individual's view of life becomes more ideal. When his view becomes thus elevated, his behaviour in the world also becomes correspondingly nobler. Philosophy is never tired of repeating that life is an orchestra ; it is not a solo-play. Each individual must, through education and his own self effort, improve his own behaviour. No doubt, he must have his own goals in life set for himself ; at the same time he must also learn to live harmoniously with others bringing about an orchestration in his social behaviour. This orchestration has not been largely achieved in the world so far, in

spite of the sincere efforts.

The politician who is talking aloud is certainly sincere. The industrialist who is trying his best to increase production is also sincere. I am sure no one will claim that the labour in the country is not sincere. The trade-union-leaders are also a sincere lot. Each one is sincere, but since each one is singing his own song, together it becomes a noisy-clamour of some disturbing discordant notes, rather than a harmonious melody of beauty. Therefore there must be a Master of Ceremonies and he must serve as a conductor, and if the conductor conducts properly all of them can fall into a synchronized harmony. He must order and regulate each individuals play, and thus generate the " dynamism of togetherness", the beauty of togetherness ; for this each must sink his arrogance and implicitly follow the signs of the conductor.

In the world to-day there is no harmony in life, nor is there synchronization in its activities. There is no synchronizing ideal for the entire humanity to look up to and act, regulating their own activities for the blessing of all. This synchronization comes into our life when we provide ourselves with an inspiring ideal ; the ideal in religion is God-hood ; in philosophy it is called Self-realization. As long as this ideal is not discovered and accepted, each member will tug and pull and try to work only for fulfilling his own little selfish desires, and so all our programmes prove even at their best only calamitous follies and stupendous failures.

Therefore to raise our happiness in our life, our religion demands the sublimation of our ego, sublimation of the individuality, the sense of the little ego, by lifting our vision to a higher standpoint.

This idea of bringing harmony in society through subjective evolution is not recognized generally by the materialists, who essentially follow the objective scientists. Objective scientists believe that the world creates man and causes his happiness. No doubt external environments are necessary for political stability, material developments, scientific growths and social justice in the world, but human happiness does not depend merely upon on all these. If that were so, for any one living in a palatial building resting on its comfortable furniture in costly and luxurious environ-

ments, there would not be any tears. Alas, now-a-days if you go to such places, you find there honest tears. If the environments govern man's happiness, then there should not be any laughter or smile in our slums, and we know that is not the case. So the external situation alone is not sufficient. Man must learn to live in harmony with and enjoy the external circumstances.

There is nothing wrong with our country nor even with any other nation in the world. Never was there anything wrong in nature There can never be anything wrong with the external world The same Sun, Moon and Stars exist and function there; the same plants, animals and mountains are there; the same flora and fauna flourish. It is only in human relationships there are confusions and problems. Man alone is suffering, not the world or nature; in nature nothing has happened to change her. Where is the environmental change? Environment changes only when each one of us gets ready to poison everybody else! It is in our mutual relationships that we have become bitter, bad and spoilt. A certain amount of respect and consideration between individuals is to be developed and cultivated to bring harmony in society; the science that develops this harmony, love and respect is called "Religion".

Without a sense of harmony, experiensable only through Love, man suffers from a voiceless pang of separateness. This condemns him to an inner sense of loneliness. He becomes afraid, afraid of himself, afraid of others. This sense of separateness creates a thousand anxieties, fears, worries and sorrows. In their turn these drive an individual to be selfish, cruel, angry and sometimes a criminal Love alone is then the answer for this general problem of human suffering.

This is a universal demand — how to end this sense of separateness and rediscover the fusion-of-love How can man learn to rise above his sense of limitations and fears? How can he discover his oneness with the world around him through love? This demand is in all and has existed at all periods of history, in all cultures, races and countries.

As long as we are in our early childhood, there is no sense

of separateness. While in the womb certainly we are one with the mother. Also, in the early years of our arrival into this world, we are still entirely one with our mother. But soon children instinctively start their fight with the mother against her sense of total possessiveness. The child's sense of separateness from its parents comes to assert itself—hence its early disobedience. This is natural with all healthy children.

But, with this freedom to revolt, comes the awareness of his separateness as a distinct individual. This sense of separateness brings with it a painfull sense of loneliness and the consequent need for fresh avenues to rediscover his oneness with the world outside. The child then experiments with new relationships from the neighbourhood, from the class-rooms, relations, teachers and others. All these attempts, to walk out from our own inner life of loneliness into the outer world are made only to discover and gain a union with all.

The individuality in each one of us, in its loneliness, seeks its escape in a thousand ways and all these have come to be accepted in society. Every new experiment with fresh means for this escape becomes a new fashion. We enthusiastically take up each one of them, and for the time being, we feel happy in it, and are even enthralled by it. But soon, it becomes stale, unsatisfactory and ineffectual. The social search starts all over again!

Thus the *Uthsavas* (fairs), congregational singing (*Kirtans*), elaborate marriage celebrations, festivals such as *Deepavali*, *Holy*, *Ram-leela* and such others, long and clamorous pilgrimages, sacred baths, *Yagnas* and *Yagas*, and now-a-days international sports and games, conferences and exhibitions, military parades and national days etc., are examples wherein the community escapes from its sense of loneliness. At these functions and happenings, each man walks out of his self-made inner prison-house of separateness and mixes with all in a general holiday-mood of complete abandon and hilarious joy.

Clubs and dance-halls, excessive-drinking and drug-addictions, anxious hoarding and all over-indulgence of every sort in life are also " escapes " for men suffering from this sense of agonizing

loneliness. But in these there can always be a lingering sense of guilt, as these are not always fully acceptable to the community. Hence, though these are "escapes" available to man, yet, even during indulgence and certainly afterwards, there is a back-lash of a disturbing guilt-consciousness that silently embitters his life from his own within.

In short, all the general methods of "escape" pursued by the many round the world, in all communities, are, even at their best, extremely unstisfactory and certainly ineffectual. They are but impotent incomplete solutions for this vexing human problem of existence.

To escape from this shattering experience of loneliness, another method instinctively taken up by man is to conform himself to a caste, group, state, or country. He then need not think about himself. He is always in the crowd, one with them all. His dress, language, thoughts, beliefs, behaviours, actions work, business, pride and affection — in all these he is one with others, and so he persuades himslef to believe that he is not separate from others around him in his community.

Driven by the need to escape from the burden that finite limited consciousness of the ego imposes upon him, as an escape from his sense of loneliness, man associates himself with like-minded individuals. He hopes at least to fortify himself against the sense of dread and dissatisfaction, despair and despondency, depression and dejection; but his hope proves false. He can never find any escape, either by indentifying himself with the false "we" of the group or by functioning with the false "I" of the lonely self-centred life.

This also then is but an unsatisfactory escape-scheme. In spite of them all, something in him compels him to be the distinct individual that he is — each of us is a unique entity. Unless we express this ego-personality we are unhappy.

Thus, though by merging our individuality with all others we may temporarily escape the pain of loneliness, yet our ego-personality will assert to express its own unique texture determined

by its distinct demands. Then the sense of separateness will again precipitate in us, with all its consequent pangs and fears. Therefore, these communal methods of "escape-through-conformity" is also not by itself sufficient to solve the problem.

Had it been totally satisfactory, the rising degree of alcoholism, drug-addiction, the alarming number of suicides in the most developed and highly progressive nations of the world, would not have continued as they are now. Man must discover his union with the world around; nothing else can save him from his horrid sense of loneliness in himself even when he is in the midst of a crowded market-place.

In the world today, we are living through an age of confusions and tensions both within and without us. The external challenges persecute us and render our lives unhappy and sorrow-ridden. In the outer world of bitter competition and immoral strife, each one of us is compelled to battle constantly with things and beings. Deep within ourselves also, we have become helpless slaves to our own uncontrollable desires and undisciplined thoughts, and therefore incapable of generating the feeling of love for things and beings other than ourselves.

After carefully analysing our weaknesses, the Masters in the religious fields advise us to grow in love and gain mastery over situations in life by rising above our limited ego-centric view of things and happenings and by expanding our mind to accommodate a constant awareness of the totality of the world — the entirety of mankind and the vastness and wholeness of the universal problems. When this total and consummate perception is developed and maintained, man's individual problems sink into insignificance and absurdity.

But, when he views his problems from a purely ego-centric and individual angle without this vision of totality, the problems assume exaggerated and enormous proportions and crush him. Such a man is like a musician in an orchestra choosing to play on his own without falling in line with the general rhythm and melody of the entire chorus of the orchestra. Hence, to live a life of harmony is to recognize oneself at every moment to be a

member of the entire humanity living in a composite universe, to merge one's life with the resonant cadence of the whole and to bring about a fascinating melody of harmonious existence.

This principle of living in harmony with the external world is not to be construed as a life of idle acceptance of or unintelligent surrender to the challenges confronting us. The apparent harmony detected by the humble and impotent adapters to challenging situations is worse than the dullness of death, while the harmony envisaged by our religious masters is based on the Oneness of the dynamic Life-principle which is the architect of all creation. This art of practising harmony is to be applied in the din and roar of the market place while we are heaving and sweating with exertion upon the narrow path of uncertain chances in life. Our life in harmony with the ampler scheme of the Cosmos brings to our heart an inward peace and poise. When poise is maintained within us, problems and challenges vanish like mist before the rising sun.

Such a personal subjective change in our maladjusted human nature is the only solution for today's problems. All the others are symptomatic treatment; they are not far reaching in tackling the fundamental springs of man's problems. Fundamentally man has to be brought out from his own misconceptions of himself. When he develops a Divine self-respect, he develops a sense of holiness and his reverence to other human beings around grows, then alone can all economic, political, social and communal disturbances come to an end.

Religion or philosophy, whether we reach it through a church, a mosque, a temple, a gurudwara or budhvihar, cultivates in man this self-reverence. The student is taught to perceive a greater Reality, a greater and Diviner Presence in everyone around him. He is guided to realize that man is not a mere mass of flesh — we are not mere consumers; we are not mere producers.

The producers and consumers together no doubt, constitute the entire world, but both of them are expressions of something Diviner in each one of us. The awareness, the spark-of-life, the "Life" is one everywhere and in everyone. Once that Spark-of-

life is gone, neither are you a consumer nor a producer — you are then nothing. It is only as long as that Immutable Spark exists in me that I am somebody — a great scientist, or a speaker, or an artist, or a writer.

One life pulsates in all of us. The Consciousness is one; that Consciousness expresses in this body as the " writer ". The Consciousness that is expressing in you as the reader and in me as the writer are both supported by the one and the same vital Truth, the Reality of life. All our activities, physical, mental and intellectual, in politics, law, economics, finance, or arts, all activities in all living creatures, are but a play of the one Life expressing through different forms.

This one Life it is that pours forth through everyone of us and that enlivens every one of us; but we fail to recognize this essential Reality! Recognize Its Divine presence as equally present in everyone. " To live in this vision of the Higher, would be a glorious social arrangement ", conclude the great thinkers of the past, the prophets of religion, the seers of man, not as a specific problem of a given period of time in a given geographical area, but as a universal problem of all human beings, living at all times and in all climes. To experience this Truth and from this standpoint to re-evaluate things and beings and readjust our relationship with the world around us, is the message of the Hindu Philosophy. Once this harmonious oneness is understood, all disturbances in life must and will automatically end.

When an individual realizes this essential oneness of the entire world of things and beings, that individual gets permanently divorced from all his mental ideas of repulsion, alienation, dislike, fear, hatred and all such other perversions of feeling and behaviour. These arise from a sense of division and plurality and consequent sense of opposition to other beings or objects around. When all the dislike and repulsion has dried up from the mind, the individual experiences an unbroken state of tranquillity thereafter in all circumstances, favourable or unfavourable. This state of mind has been described in the *Geeta* also by the term *Samattwa*.

* He who constantly recognizes everywhere all existence in the Self and the Self in all beings and forms, thereafter shrinks not from anything.

The human individual is proving himself inefficient and ineffectual in this world of contentions mainly of his own inner agitations. A tranquil mind is as potent as God; the more we gain this inward tranquillity (*Samattwa*), the more joyous and effective our lives become. The enemy of this tranquillity, according to the *Rishis*, is our own *Jugupsa*.

Jugupsa is the feeling of repulsion caused by a sense of want of harmony between one's own limited self-formation and the contacts of the external with a consequent recoil of grief, fear, hatred, discomfort and suffering. It is the opposite of attraction which is the source of desire and attachment. Repulsion and attraction removed, we have *Samattwa*.

Repulsion, hatred, shrinking, dislike and fear etc., can come not against oneself, but against *another*. The intellectual "I" may dislike or fear or hate the mental "I" at a given time and place; here also there is a pluralistic concept. "The other" is always necessary for one to entertain *Jugupsa*; but when we have realized and are experiencing the Oneness of the Self and when we have got well established in that experience, can there be "the other" excepting the Self?

When "the other" has retreated, the mental perversion of *Jugupsa* also disappears from the mind. This is the great Goal of perfection pointed out by the Great *Rishis*, and we may add here that in no other religion of the world has this scientific truth been so vividly explained as in *Vedanta*. When man has fully and completely experienced the Life Principle, the Self within him, which is the one that is All pervading, such an individual's

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* यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतानि
आत्मन्येवानुपश्यति ।
सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं
ततो न विजुगुप्सते ॥

(Isa. Up-6)

realization alone is true wisdom, Eternal and Immortal. The one who has thus realized the core of all beings as the core in himself, and his own Self as the Self in every name and form, is a sage, a prophet, a Godman and a true leader in life.

That man of Self-realization has understood in his own vital experience that he is not a separate individual opposed to others and in his essential nature, he is nothing but the harmony or unity that underlies all seeming discord of plurality. He who has thus realized his oneness with the entirety can no longer have the ordinary tossings of the mind arising out of the ordinary psychological tensions created through temptation (*Moha*), or through grief (*Shoka*).

> *** When to the Knower, all beings have become one in his own *Atman*, how can he feel deluded thereafter ? What grief can there be to him who sees everywhere oneness ?**

Grief (*Shoka*) is the expression of delusion. The amount of grief in an individual's life is directly proportional to the amount of delusion in him. In his essential Nature he is All Bliss. Unity or harmony is Bliss. But in delusion when he cognizes plurality and discord, there arises in him the experience of grief. This delusion creates grief, the more the delusion, the more the grief.

To get away from grief is the goal of life that is sought by every living creature, whether man or animal. *Moksha* or liberation is the transcendence of the individual beyond the shores of sorrow. Here the stanza indicates that beyond the shores of sighs and sobs lies the land of realization wherein the Knower experiences in his own Self the entire Universe to be one, which is nothing but his own Real Nature.

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* यस्मिन्सर्वाणि भूतानि
आत्मैवाभूद्विजानतः ।
तत्र को मोहः कः शोक
एकत्वमनुपश्यतः ॥

(Isa. Up-7)

The pot-space can discard all its sense of limitations, imperfections and sorrows, only when it rediscovers itself to be nothing but the Universal space. Each individual wave will have its own sorrows of birth, growth, decay and death only when it considers itself separate from others; but on its realization that it is nothing but the ocean in its essential nature, all its sorrows end and no more will it have its own delusory idea that it is separate from others. Where there is no delusion there is no grief; grief is the expression of delusion.

Self-realization is never complete by a mere recognition of the intrinsic divinity or perfection in the Self within, excluding the Self expressing in the pluralistic world. To realize one's own Self is to realize at once Its oneness with the All-Self. To realize the nature of a wave is to realize not only the nature of all the waves, but the very nature of the Ocean. Life being one and unbroken, to experience the Life Centre within us is to experience at once all the Life Centre every where.

Thus, a saint of realization, experiencing his own Self shining out through every name and form expressing its own dynamism through every circumstance, happy or sorrowful, is eternally in unison with harmony and rhythm amidst the discordant noise of life. To him are the greatest potencies, the greatest joys and the amplest successes in life.

Though we are in reality this Life-Centre alone, in our misunderstanding of our real nature, we superimpose our identity on one or the other of the outer envelopments, and claim to ourselves the different identities. Thus at one moment we are the body, and we say "I have grown dark" or "I am a Brahmin" or "I am short" etc.; at another moment we identify ourselves with our mind, then we say "I am doubtful", "I am agitated", "I am worried" etc.; yet at another time we consider ourselves to be the intellect and then we say "I am dull", "I have an idea", etc.

Thus, identifying ourselves to be one or the other of the matter envelopments, we fool ourselves and come to suffer the consequent sense of limitation, sorrow and unrest. In this sense,

Samsar is our own creation, and so, the entire responsibility for our limitations and sorrows lies with us only.

Therefore *Acharya* Shankara says:

> * **Due to his ignorance man identifies the Self with the non-Self (*anatman*). This is the bondage of man, and it brings in its wake the miseries of birth and death. Through this he considers his perishable body as real. He identifies himself with it and nourishes, bathes and preserves it with the help of sense-objects. Thereby he becomes bound, like the silk-worm in its cocoon woven by its own threads.**

I am at present a confused, confounded, entity. At one moment I am a sweet little thing, and at another a terrible monster, because of the variety of my physical demands of lusts, mental demands for emotional satisfactions and a perturbed intellect, tossed by its endless mischievous thoughts. Somehow, I am aware of all this, yet I cannot get out of it. Why this helpless bondage? All the pernicious sorrows arise because I, the *Atman*, misunderstand myself to be the non-Self (*un-atman*).

When this body is not only considered as real, but when in total identification with it, a man asserts that the body alone is real; then there can be only one duty in life for him — that is to fatten, to nourish, to feed it and to enjoy himself thoroughly. Think of the tragedy! You must attend to this body constantly, all the twenty-four hours of all the three hundred and sixtyfive days of a year, even one day more in a leap year! There is no escape. You must be with it all the time, without any holiday. You become an all-time-servant of your own body. You can have a release from your office, home, friends, society — from every thing — but never from the body-catering-mission in life.

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* अत्रानात्मन्यहमिति मतिर्बन्ध एषोऽस्य पुंसः
प्राप्तोऽज्ञानाज्जननमरणक्लेशसंपातहेतुः ।
येनैवायं वपुरिदमसत्सत्यमित्यात्मबुद्ध्या
पुष्यत्युक्षत्यवति विषयैस्तन्तुभिः कोशकृद्वत् ॥

(VC–137)

The silk-worm spins fine threads from its own saliva and weaves a cocoon around itself. The cocoon becomes thicker and stronger until at last the worm gets imprisoned in it and cannot come out easily. Similarly, once the misunderstanding that "I am the body" has arisen, this false notion makes endless demands for the preservation of the body. These demands multiply and become so strong that the individual gets gagged and bound by them.

How and where did this misunderstanding of the *unatman* to be the *Atman* arise? When did the Absolute become the relative? Such questions in terms of time and space often arise in our minds. Therefore Shankara continues :

> *** This bondage caused by the non-Self springs from ignorance and is self-caused. It is described as without a beginning and without an end. It subjects one to an endless flood of miseries—birth, disease, senility and death.**

Ignorance is said to be self-caused. It is not caused by any other cause. It is the nature of a cave to have darkness in it. Darkness in the cave is not created by the cave. Similarly, when the Self is not known, there is darkness in the bosom. In terms of the intellect, all that can be said is that this ignorance, *Avidya*, is without a beginning and without an end, meaning thereby that it is essentially beyond "Time". As long as there is a concept of time, the *Samsar* experiences will be there because time is the medium in which *Samsar* is perceived. The moment time is transcended, *Samsar* must also end. "Beginning" and "End" are meaningful only in the medium of time

If all the sorrows are to be removed, the cause for them has to be removed. Ignorance can be removed only by the subjective experience of the Infinite Reality.

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* अज्ञानमूलोऽयमनात्मबन्धो
नैसर्गिकोऽनादिरनन्त ईरितः ।
जन्माप्ययव्याधिजरादिदुःख-
प्रवाहपातं जनयत्यमुष्य ॥

(VC–146)

All the sorrows of *Samsar* arise out of the confusion between the *Atman* and *unatman*, the Self and the non-Self. In order to end these sorrows, this confusion has to be ended. This confusion is called bondage. How can one cut this bondage? How can one destroy and end it?

Acharya Shankara gives the method in the following two stanzas in his Vivekachoodamani :

> *** Neither by weapons, nor by wind, nor by fire, not by millions of actions can this bondage be destroyed. By nothing save by the wonder-sword of Knowledge which comes from discrimination and is sharpened by the purification of the mind and intellect, can this bondage be ended.**
>
> **** He alone who has deep devotion to the *Srutis* and who is established in his *Swadharma*—for these alone contribute to the purity of the mind—and is of pure mind realizes the Supreme Self. By this Knowledge alone is this *samsar* destroyed, root and branch.**

Thus, this *Avidya* can be ended neither by any known scientific instrument of annihilation, nor by any of Nature's rupturing reactions resulting in destruction, nor by millions of activities, noble or ignoble. This non-apprehension can be ended only by the sword of discrimination, when it results in the first-hand experience of the Pure Self. This sword has to be sharpened

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* नास्त्रैर्न शस्त्रैरनिलेन वह्निना
छेत्तुं न शक्यो न च कर्मकोटिभिः ।
विवेकविज्ञानमहासिना विना
धातुः प्रसादेन सितेन मञ्जुना ॥

(VC–147)

** श्रुतिप्रमाणैकमतेः स्वधर्म-
निष्ठा तयैवात्मविशुद्धिरस्य ।
विशुद्धबुद्धेः परमात्मवेदनं
तेनैव संसारसमूलनाशः ॥

(VC–148)

by cleansing the inner instruments — the mind and the intellect. This purification can be done by reducing desires; for when desires are reduced, agitations of the mind and the intellect are reduced. The quieter the mind, the greater the contemplative power in man — and a developed power of contemplation makes discrimination sharper.

Knowledge of the *Srutis* gained through sincere study and continuous reflection upon them, facilitates selfless and dedicated activity, which helps one to quieten the mind. Then as an irresistible sequence, the experience of Reality floods the seeker's heart.

That man alone whose intellect is soaked in the knowledge of the *Upanishads* whose mind has become single-pointedly devoted to the truths declared in the scriptures, can walk the path of *Swadharma*. *Swadharma* is the nature (*Dharma*) of one's own Self (*Swa*). He alone who has knowledge of the Self will be able to live the nature of the Self. Else, again and again he will slip into the false idea, "I am the body".

The *Upanishads* are the best literature in the world that have successfully explained and defined, the inexplicable and the indefinable Self. The *Vedanta* literature not only explains to us theoretically the knowledge (*Gyana*) of the Self, but also various techniques by which it can become a subjective knowledge, a vivid personal experience (*Vignana*). Thus, the study of the scriptures in itself is never complete until the theoretical knowledge discussed therein becomes our subjective experience. Then alone the true meaning (*Artha*) of the scriptural declarations becomes fully apprehended and determined.

Thus we read in the *Mundakopanishad* the following *Mantra* which details the entire scheme of self-unfoldment and the final Goal that can give true liberation to a sincere seeker.

> * Having well ascertained beyond all traces of doubts the exact import of the *Upanishads* and having

* वेदान्तविज्ञानसुनिश्चितार्थाः संन्यासयोगात् यतयः शुद्धसत्त्वाः ।
ते ब्रह्मलोकेषु परान्तकाले परामृताः परिमुच्यन्ति सर्वे ॥

(Mu. Up., Ch. III, Sec. II-6)

> purified their minds with the "Yoga of renunciation", all anchorites reach the world of *Brahman* and having enjoyed immortality, at the time of death become fully liberated.

A personal study of the Scripture may not be always sufficient to help the *Sadhak* to go beyond the literary meaning of the language used and reach the Realms of Truth indicated in the texts. To a large extent, a master of experience is needed to complete the study of the *Upanishads*. Hence it is that the *Mantra* here defines a great Seeker as one who has well-ascertained, beyond all traces of doubt, the true import of the sacred *Mantra*. Misunderstandings, half-understandings and non-understandings can blockade the real fulfilment of a sincere study of the Scriptures.

Not only is it necessary that a vigilant and sincere seeker should first of all ascertain the true import of the declarations in the *Upanishads*, but he must also, through the *Yoga of Renunciation* purify both his psychological and intellectual personalities. The word "*Sanyasa Yoga*" is not to be taken literally to mean "having taken to *Sanyas*", for in that case, it would mean that *Vedanta* is applicable only to a rare minority of men and women clothed in a special garb. The "*Yoga of Renunciation*" is more an internal revolution of the values of life entertained and lived, rather than a big advertisement-board declaring externally that one is a *Sanyasin*. It is true that external symbols have their limited use, but a mere external show will not take us even an inch nearer to our great goal of perfection. In short, a mere fence around a plot of ground will not yield a crop, however long we may wait for it; but a cultivated land can be well protected with a fencing round it to good advantage.

Thus, "*Sanyasa Yoga*" is to be understood as the mental *Sanyas* with all our emphasis on the internal attitude of the mind, rather than upon the external physical show of a *Sanyasigarb* or a *Sanyasi*-status. Therefore the "*Yoga of Renunciation*" indicates our mental renunciation of all the grossness and animalism in us.

Thus, having ascertained well the *Upanishadic* imports and having successfully carried out the above mentioned inner

revolution in character, attitude and values of life the aspirant is fit to meditate upon the scriptural text. Such a purified mind and intellect alone can, with poise and ease, fly in the dimensionless Realms of the Self. The *Sruti* is giving here a positive promise that all such seekers shall certainly reach their goal without being blockaded by any obstacles on the way. If any one of us is meeting with obstacles, either from outside or from within, they are all because we are not well established in the true "*Yoga of Renunciation*". Without it, no progress is ever possible. There is no compromise or by-lanes or shortcuts in this great pilgrimage to Truth.

When the seekers develop their "inner purity", it is declared in the second half of the *Mantra*, that such seekers experience in themselves a greater unfoldment. According to the degree of this experience gained, the *Upanishads* declare two types of realization: (*a*) Direct Experience of the Infinite, even while continuing in our physical embodiment, called "*Jeevanmukti*"; and (*b*) "Realization by stages" "*Krama Mukti*", wherein the seeker after leaving his physical existence, enters into the realm of the Creator, called *Brahmaloka*. There, while enjoying a subtle life of enjoyment, he prepares himself for the highest experience and gains it at the end of the dissolution (*Pralaya*). Both these paths are laid out, chartered and described in the *Upanishadic* literature. Accordingly here, the *Mantra* under discussion is so worded that both the paths are indicated.

Para-Antha-Kale means "At the final end"; this is the literal meaning of the term. This can be interpreted as "at the end of the world's dissolution (*Pralaya*)", or subjectively, "at the end of the ego-centric existence"; realization in stages and also immediate Eternal Experience are both implied by this term. This term has also been interpreted as "at the time of death".

There is a great controversy in the Hindu Philosophic discussions on whether a mortal can fully experience Godhood in this very life or not. There is a school of thought which on the literal interpretation of *Mantras*, like the one here under discussion believes and declares that complete and full realization of *Brahman*

is not possible as long as we exist in this physical form. There are yet others who believe and declare that full and complete God realization is quite possible *here and now*, and that a realized soul can continue to live enjoying the *Jeevanmukti* status.

In this interesting controversy, to any impartial intellect the arguments of Shankara and his conclusions should be convincing beyond all traces of doubt. According to Shankara, *Jeevanmukti* is possible and it is exactly that state that is meant by the *Sruti;* for, if such a status is not possible, Shankara argues that we cannot at all have a perfect *Guru* in this world to teach us the immortal *Brahma Vidya*. According to the very *Upanishads,* " a perfect *Guru* is he who is at once well-versed in the scriptural literature and also fully established in the experience of Godhood ". According to Shankara then, the death mentioned here is only the death of the false vanities and the delusive ego-sense. When the little " I " dies, what remains is the Godly and the All-pervading Spiritual " I ". " Die to live the life Divine " seems to be the clarion call of *Vedanta* to every generation.

Para-Amritaha: This term also can be applied to both types of realization. Those liberated in life (*Jeevanmuktas*) come to live that which lies beyond (*Para*), the very Essense of Immortality (*Amrit*). Mortality and Immortality are two intellectual concepts and both of them are illumined by the Consciousness in us. The illuminator is always something other than the illumined. In this sense of the term, The Absolute is indicated as a Blazing Factor that transcends the very concepts of mortality and immortality. Such mighty masters who have become one with the Self are naturally indicated here as those who have " gone beyond even Immortality " (*Para Amritaha*) ".

After this final experience of " God-vision ", the seeker becomes liberated for ever from all bondages experienced by him till then because of his identification with matter, and so he gets liberated totally from everything (*Parimuchhanti Sarve*). When such convincing assertions are made by the teacher, the true student, who is ever a man of practical vision, comes to demand personal experience of truth. *Vedanta* laughs at any theory, however logical it may be, unless there be in it a scientific process

visualized by which a diligent seeker can come to experience the Truth in himself. In all the *Upanishads* therefore, we find not only a description of a " view of life " but also an exhaustive discussion of the technique of Self-Realization as a " way of life ".

What exactly would be the harm if one did not live implicitly according to the way of life advocated in the *Sastra ?* The conseqences of such an unintelligent and indifferent disregard of the right-way-of-life is clearly indicated by Lord Krishna in this stanza from the *Geeta.*

> * He who, having cast aside the ordinances of the scriptures, acts under the impulse of desire, attains not perfection, nor happiness, nor the Supreme Goal.

Cultural unfoldment cannot be an overnight miraculous development. This bud should grow, open and bloom under the careful nourishment of steady discipline, vigorous study and perfect understanding. This unfoldment is more delicate than that of a flower. The energies conserved by an individual have to be applied in the right direction for his own personality development. If the energy is misused, the chances are the seeker would dash himself down to the depths of a miserable life. Ravana and such other mighty *Asuras* of the *Puranas* are typical examples of personalities who performed rigorous *tapascharya* (*Penance*) and accumulated inner dynamism. So mighty was their strength that they made their own generation rock, crumble and bite the dust, and yet in the end achieved only a complete self destruction.

Therefore, before setting on a pilgrimage to that goal, every seeker is required to study intelligently the scriptures, which are the reports left for our guidance by those who successfully walked the path earlier. A correct knowledge and a clear intellectual vision of the Supreme goal and the direction in which it lies and also the possible difficulties enroute are the unavoidable prerequisites for a seeker. Therefore:

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* यः शास्त्रविधिमुत्सृज्य वर्तते कामकारतः ।
न स सिद्धिमवाप्नोति न सुखं न परां गतिम् ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVI–23)

> *** Therefore, let the scriptures be your authority, in determining what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Having known what is said in the ordinananaces of the scriptures, you should act here (in this world).**

The right conduct in life can be determined only when the individual has the correct knowledge of *what is to be pursued* and *what is to be avoided.* The grand road to Truth is the same for all. It cannot be determined by each pilgrim according to his whims and fancies. *Shastras* are declared by those who had travelled the road many a time. When the *Rishis* have supplied us with a map of the road to Perfection, we the humble pedestrians, must pursue the path faithfully.

Many of the seekers may 'know' the *Shastras* extensively *and in all* their details, but alas, how few of them discover in themselves the courage to live, the will to pursue and the patience to strive on until the Supreme is realized within themselves !

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* तस्माच्छास्त्रं प्रमाणं ते कार्याकार्यव्यवस्थितौ ।
ज्ञात्वा शास्त्रविधानोक्तं कर्म कर्तुमिहार्हसि ॥

(Ge.Ch. XVI-24)

Section - II

The Genesis of Man

4

The Harmony in Creation

Through an ill-adjusted telescope or microscope, we know, any object will, of necessity, look blurred with its details lost in a *general confusion* of *data. The* more *rightly* we *focus* the instrument the clearer will become our appreciation and true evaluation of the perceived object. Similarly is our perception of the world outside vague, and our estimation of life false, when we bring into it a mal-adjusted mind-intellect equipment.

In this sense, if we compare the function of the mind and intellect with an ordinary telescope, we can say that the inner telescope in us has the mind for its "object-glass" and the intellect as its "eye-piece". When the adjustments in each of them are not correct and when their relationship with each other is not properly maintained the object viewed does not faithfully represent its true form. The more perfect their adjustments the better the vision through them.

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When an individual has integrated his mind and intellect through one or the other, or a combination, of the various spiritual practices, then that individual gains a deeper and clearer vision

of his "life as a whole". He is no longer available for any vulgar enthusiasm to sweep him away from himself and make him a victim of some of the passing fancies of his generation. He independently evaluates life and with a tragic poignancy comes to feel the dire imperfections that poison everything. He perceives the descent of a dark veil of finitude upon the world around him making it ugly and insufferably detestable.

This does not mean that he turns himself cynical or that he becomes a victim of either a mental dejection or any intellectual pessimism. It only means that in his ruthless judgement he sees life — all the happenings without and within him, the lot of people outside his home and the destiny of himself in his own family — in their stark nakedness bereft of all sentimentalities or aversions, as a scientist observes the rising sun through his telescope.

The intellectual vision of the scientist is not clouded by the sentimental emotions of a poet or the deeper discoveries of a mystic and his perceptions. The scientist observes a phenomena and carefully notes down his observations of data. Similarly, when through right living and correct thinking a seeker gets fully integrated within, he comes to see things *as they are,* stripped naked of his attachments, vanities, preconceived mental dreams and their associated ideas.

Such a full grown *man-man* becomes fully qualified for the pursuit of Truth through the "Path of Knowledge" which *Vedanta* prescribes. Such an individual comes to see a purposeless hollowness in the business called "Life" as it is lived in the world. He comes to wonder and ask whether life is "but an empty dream". At the same time his acute intelligence instinctively tells him that it cannot be so and that there must be some greater purpose behind it all, which he is not able to perceive.

This restlessness of the soul, glowing at first as a mere intellectual quest, soon burns up in a conflagaration and, roasted in this deep and subtle fire within, he becomes all ablaze with doubts and questions, and seeks a solution for this great riddle called life. Religion is then the only remedy for this particular unrest felt by man, even when he has an abundance of all the best

in life. Religion is the technique by which an individual can train his mind and intellect to grasp and understand the larger themes of the Universe and his own exact place in it.

The questionings and innermost cravings of the soul disturb only the full-grown man. Even among the bipeds we can recognize the animals; we have among us tigers, wolves, deer, serpents, scorpions, etc. Such men as are lowly evolved fail to listen to the doubts and despairs of the soul-quest from within. Having no such inner voiceless-woe, they need no remedy.

But to the one who has evolved himself into a full-grown man such cravings of the soul flood his being and push him incessantly towards the utmost limit of his understandings and feelings. In the unrest of the soul be comes to despair at the wonder and majesty of the most intimate fact in him — Life. The questions he asks himself are: Where did I come from? Where do I go? Why have I come? Is there a mission in life?

Such were the doubts in the mind of Katyayana Kabandi when he approached his master and asked the following question.

> * **Then Katyayana Kabandi approached Pippalada and asked, "Revered venerable master, whence are the creatures born?"**

His question is a direct enquiry into the phenomena of the world with a view to discover the Ultimate cause for all the pluralistic experiences This is an intellect's natural attempt to understand what it cognizes. The intellect can enquire only through a method of hunting for the cause, to seek the cause of things is the only method of right understanding available for the intellect. Thus, wherever an *effect* is perceived, the intellect, in an attempt to understand it, seeks for its cause. This causation-hunting preoccupation of the intellect is first of all to be satisfied if he has to redeem his sacred instrument-of-reasoning and apply it exclusively in the spiritual enquiry.

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* अथ कबन्धी कात्यायन उपेत्य पप्रच्छ ।
भगवन् कुतो ह वा इमाः प्रजाः प्रजायन्त इति ॥

(Pr. Up., Q. I-3)

Living as he does mainly in the realm of the body, mind and intellect, the student is full of the impressions of the world gained from the objects of his experiences during his waking and dreaming hours. His intellect is impatient to find an explanation for the perceptions of his mind; however, all that the intellect can do is to seek an immediate cause. Each time he may find a cause for the perceived effect, but that cause itself comes to demand yet another cause prior to it. Thus this causation hunting becomes an endless game, because, even that very "first cause" that one can imagine must, in its turn have yet another cause! Exhausted and weary with this frustrating game, a growing human intellect must necessarily come to seek its satisfaction at the door of the scriptures.

Intellectually we can enquire into and try to understnd the truth of a phenomenon only by asking questions like how, when, why, where, etc.—questions regarding the time, place and causation of the objects of enquiry. The student has approached the master with a poignant intellect that had earlier tried independently to understand the world of creation around his life. In his enquiry, he must necessarily come to ask questions like, from where did all these come? What was there before the first creation, etc. These questions are answered by the master in the opening lines of the *Aitareya Upanishad.*

> *** In the beginning, verily, *Atman* (Self) alone was this (the Universe)....................nothing else whatsoever was active.**

"Before the creation of the world *Brahman* alone existed", would have been a more correct statement, but here the master has deliberately used the word *Atman.* It was not without a purpose; it indicates indeed, the very kernal of *Vedanta !*

An enquiry into the objective world can fulfil itself only when we discover its connection with reference to ourselves. The

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* ॐ आत्मा वा इदमेक एवाग्र आसीत् ।
नान्यत् किंचन मिषत् ॥

(Ai. Up., Ch. I., Sec. I-1)

world is always understood by an individual only with reference to himself. Applying this truth the *Rishi* seems to drive home the idea into the student that before the creation of the pluralistic world all that existed was the Self (*Atman*) of the seeker, which is, of course, nothing other than the All-Pervading Reality, (*Brahman*), for there is no difference between the Reality behind the individual and the Universe.

If before the creation there was a Self besides any other active principle (Sankhyans believe that there is another principle in addition to the Self called *Pradhan*), then both of them would become finite in nature. To indicate that the Self is Infinite, it is said, "All this was *Atman alone*", and in order to emphasis this idea further it is stated that "*nothing else whatsoever active existed*".

This idea that the Self alone existed, so irrevocably expressed, indicates that the Supreme did not create the world of plurality out of some material cause as a pot-maker makes his pots out of the mud which is other than himself. In the creation of the world, the Supreme itself is both the material and efficient cause. This idea is explained beautifully in the *Mundakopanishad* as follows:

> *** As a spider projects and withdraws (into itself) the web, as the plants sprout from the earth, as hair grows on the head and body of a man, so from the imperishable comes out the Universe.**

On the whole, the three pictures given in the stanza distinctly give us three sets of ideas which we must comprehend fully in order to grasp the entire process of creation. They are:

(I) Out of Him the world has come without the intervention of any cause other than Himself, and in the end the projected world will be absorbed back again into the Divine.

(II) The Supreme exerts neither the effort nor the purpose

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* यथोर्णनाभिः सृजते गृह्णते च यथा पृथिव्यामोषधयः सम्भवन्ति ।
यथा सतः पुरुषात् केशलोमानि तथाक्षरात् सम्भवतीह विश्वम् ॥

(Mu. Up., Ch. I., Sec. I-7)

with which the spider creates the web. Creation is an effortless, purposeless projection—a Divine *Leela* (play).

(III) The Supreme is not a dead inert matter like the earth but is a conscious active vital personality, a Positive Entity, an All-Pervading Essence, Absolute Existence-Knowledge-Bliss (*Sat-Chit-Ananda*).

Here, an intelligent man may analyse the above mentioned statements and will probably arrive at a crucial doubt, thus:

(*a*) For the unmanifested world to manifest itself from the Infinite Reality, what are the auxiliary causes that should be present in order to hasten and finally accomplish this great projection of the world ?

Again, there can be another doubt:

(*b*) What exactly is the material cause with which the creator is creating the world of forms and names ?

In the cause-effect relationship, for the conversion of the cause into effect, three things are unavoidable: (i) the raw material, which is "the material cause" for the finished product, (ii) the "machinery" necessary for it, guided by, (iii) an "intelligent efficient cause". The mud and the wheel alone cannot make a pot, unless there is an efficient cause, the intelligent man, who wants this manifestation to be produced. He is the dynamic entity who lends his intelligence to the machinery to make it function according to his will. In the creation of the world this *Chetana* giver is *Iswara.*

To project anything unmanifest into manifestation is called creation. Naturally, the creator, *ISWARA*, is none other than the Supreme Self functioning through the potential world possibilities lying dormant in the Supreme. Thus *Acharya* Shankara in his "*Dakshinamoorthi Stotram*" has given us a most expressive example to indicate that the world-possibility was already latent in the All-Full Truth.

* This prostration is to the Divine Teacher, Sri Dakshinamoorthi, who, like a juggler or a great *Yogi*, has unrolled this universe just out of His own free-will, the Universe, which before creation remained unmanifest, like the future tree in a seed and has later on projected Himself out to be the world of endless variety, due to the delusory play of time and space, both being the products of *Maya*.

The world of manifested Names and Forms, so fully spread out in space and playing in the stream of time, was lying expressionless in an unmanifest condition, as the tree remains in the embryo of a seed. When the seed is placed in favourable conditions, the embryo asserts itself into its full manifestation as a tree. But in its seed-condition, the distinctions such as trunk, branches, twigs, leaves, buds, fruits, etc., are not there, though they are potentially present in the embryo. Similarly, the world of names and forms was potentially there, in the *Vasana-form, in* the Unmanifest.

When these *Vasanas* mature sufficiently, they are ripe for expression. Borrowing their abilities and capacities from the *Infinite*, they manifest themselves to form *the gross world and* the daily actions of the beings therein. Here the word "*punah*" meaning "again", is to be understood as "at the time of creation".

The *Vedantic* theory of creation is that, after the *Pralaya* or deluge (dissolution), the world of beings, remaining at that time in the form of *Vasanas* (mental impressions) exerts itself to create a field wherein all the beings can seek complete fulfilment. In their maturity they project forth a world that is fit for them to express themselves fully. These *Vasanas* or mental impressions together in their totality become "the cause" that is directly responsible for the creation of the world.

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* बीजस्यान्तरिवाङ्कुरो जगदिदं प्राङ् निर्विकल्पं पुन-
र्माया कल्पितदेशकाल कलना वैचित्र्य चित्री कृतम् ।
मायावीव विजृम्भयत्यपि महायोगीव यःस्वेच्छया
तस्मै श्रीगुरुमूर्तये नम इदं श्रीदक्षिणामूर्तये ॥

(C

In the worldly sense of the term, "creation" is generally understood as the production of something new. Philosophically viewed, "creation" has a subtler significance and a more intimate meaning. A pot-maker can "create" pots out of mud! But the act of "creation" is only the production of a name and a form, with some specific qualities, out of a raw-material, in which the same name, form and qualities already exist in an unmanifest condition. The "*Potness*" was there in the mud, where as the "*Ladduness*" was not there, and therefore, a pot can be "created" from a given sample of mud, but not even a tiny bit of *Laddu* from that very same sample of mud. Hence, it is concluded by the experts in *Vedanta* that "*creation is but a projection of the dormant names, forms and qualities now unmanifest into their manifest condition.*"

> *** From the unmanifest emerge all the manifest at the coming of the "day"; at the coming of the "night" they merge verily in that alone which is called the unmanifest.**

Just as there is a consistency of species in procreation, so also, there is a consistency noticeable in the multiplication of thoughts. Just as frogs breed frogs or men breed men or mango seeds germinate and grow up to bring forth mangoes, so too good thoughts creating good thought-currents can multiply only into a flood of good thoughts. These thought-impressions (*Vasanas*) in the mind that lie imperceptible to our sense-organs and to our mental and intellectual perceptions, become manifested as gross thoughts, words and actions.

The individual mind projects, creates and sustains what its vasanas dictate, and without any regret scraps the whole lot, only to create afresh. This continuous function takes place in each individual only during the day time, which represents his waking state. In the same manner the Cosmic Creator also is conceived as creating the gross world of dense objects and intelligent beings only during His waking hours.

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* अव्यक्ताद्व्यक्तयः सर्वा प्रभवन्त्यहरागमे ।
रात्र्यागमे प्रलीयन्ते तत्रैवाव्यक्तसंज्ञके ॥

(Ge. Ch. VIII–18)

The Supreme Reality, the Infinite Consciousness, expressing through the totality of the mental impressions (*Vasanas*), is called *Iswara*, the Divine Dispenser of the fruits of actions. This *Iswara*, the Infinite Supreme, expressing Himself as both material *and efficient causes, is not independent to* create a world as He likes. He is compelled to project forth a world as determined by the texture and the quality of the *Vasanas* that urgently assert to seek their fulfilment in the world to be created.

In a portion of a city, when we want to develop a park, the contractor and his creative ability are limited by the type of people that are to come and seek their recreation therein. If children were to visit the park, he has to provide the park with the fittings common in a children's park; if youngsters are to come and play and sweat, the contractor has to lay out fields for cricket, hockey and foot-ball and facilities for other vigorous games; if old retired people are to use the park, there aught to be plenty of trees and comfortable chairs in which these superannuated men can sit around and air their views and air their senile bodies! Similarly, the Lord, the Creator, the Supreme, conditioned by the total *Vasanas* in the cosmos, is not free to create a world the better *or the worse, but He has to serve the totality, as a contractor* would serve his principal.

This "theory of creation" is indeed very difficult for the ordinary man to understand, when he with his untrained intellect tries to digest the cosmic happening. So too are the intricate theories and arguments in higher physics, as in Einstein's "Theory of Relativity." But the "Theory of Creation" can be made more readily comprehensible if we try to perceive its applications in our own life. Thus, objectively, if the "Theory of Creation" is too confusing, subjectively, it becomes very easy for us to understand.

Suppose a criminal and a great *saint are both sleeping in the* same verandah of a *Dharmasala*. Then the world of bad intentions of the criminal and the world of divine impulses of the saint, both lie absorbed in themselves. There are no manifestations of criminality through the criminal just as there are no manifestations of divinity through the saint. But in an unmanifested c

the criminality is with the criminal and the divinity with the saint. When they both wake up, they create their individual worlds to express their individual *Vasanas*, so that while one finds a field to sing his songs of adoration to the Lord and inspire people to be pious and noble, the other finds his own world scintillating with chances for perpetrating his cruel criminalities.

This state of sleep, when the individual ego dissolves his private world, is considered equivalent to the cosmic state of *Pralaya,* when the whole world is in a state of dissolution; and yet, as in the individual, so too, in the cosmic, the manifested comes only to lie merged into a state of unmanifestation. That is all. Thus on waking up the criminal is as much a helpless victim of his criminality as the saint is irresistibly under the influence of the Divine. Thus, the totality of *Vasanas* determine and order the type of world to be created. The projection of a new world takes place when with irresistible impatience the matured *Vasanas* press forward to express themselves.

A child cannot be kept within the womb when the pregnancy has matured to its fullness; in its own maturity the child emerges out of mother's womb. Similarly, the *Vasanas*, maturing themselves push us out of the peaceful quietude of sleep into the world of activity. A typical example perhaps will make this more clear. Supposing you have to meet somebody or catch a train in the early hours of dawn, say at 4 a.m.; you would find invariably that you get only broken sleep that night and you get up precisely at the right hour. Here, at the time of retiring, you gave a powerful suggestion to the mind, and the impressions created by such a wilful planning have been stored up and they are timed to mature exactly at 4 a.m. Naturally, without anybody's help, the suitable *Vasanas*, ready to manifest at 4 a.m.; impatiently project forth, and so disturbed within, you wake up in time to fulfil that desire.

In the same way, the Supreme Consciousness working through the total *Vasanas*, (in which state the world is existing at the time of *Pralaya*) becomes a personality (*Iswara*) that is capable of desiring, willing and executing. This theory of creation is what is indicated when the *Upanishads* say:

* He thought I shall indeed create the worlds.

** He desired "I shall become many and be born." He performed *Tapas*. Having performed *Tapas*, He created all this whatsoever we perceive.

The Supreme, functioning through the total *Vasanas*, *Iswara*, first desired. It identified Itself with the desire and performed *Tapas*. *Concentrated and consistent thinking in the line of a desired objective is Tapas*. These thoughts dynamize the desire and the Individuality, meaning "the Supreme, identified with this desire", struggles to create the necessary world in which It can fulfil Its desire. Having created the world, He enters it, meaning, He comes to live in an intimate and immediate relationship with the world of objects so created. "Thus", concludes the *Rishi*, "the Supreme Himself becomes the entire world of experience in plurality !!"

Individually, each one of us is doing the same in our everyday life. An advocate, an insurance agent, a doctor, a banker, a minister, a clerk, a priest and a cheat — if these eight people were to wake up from their sleep, the primary desires, with which they would start projecting their world would be different from one another. The advocate desires for more clients, the insurance agent wants more and more rich people whom he can trade upon, the priest wants more devotees to pray upon and the cheat desires a throng of people who have more money than brains in them !

In each of them we find that his individual desire is conditioned by the quality and the texture of his *Vasanas* In the same way the total *Vasana-crowd* at the time of dissolution raise in their maturity a desire to create the world wherein all the *Vasanas* can find a field to express themselves. Thereafter creation is but a natural projection and expansion.

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* स ईक्षत लोकान्नु सृजा इति ॥

(Ai. Up., Ch. I, Sec. 1-2)

** सोऽकामयत । बहु स्यां प्रजायेयेति । स तपोऽतप्यत ।
सतपस्तप्त्वा । इदं सर्वमसृजत । यदिदं किंच ।

(Tai. Up., B. Valli, Sec.–6)

Each individual creates his own world around himself due to his *Vasanas* (*Avidya*) through his mind. The sum of each one's world put together is the total world which we call the Universe, the *Jagat*. Therefore, the total world, the Universe, is created by the total mind when expressing through the total *Vasanas*, otherwise called *Maya*. Thus the Supreme, functioning through total *Avidya* is God, *Iswara*, and the Supreme expressing through total mind is the Creator (*Brahmaji*), who creates the Universe.

We have understood that individually we have a projection of the world, when the mind rolls itself out. The world is withdrawn again when our mind is rolled up in restful state of deep sleep. If this be true to you and me, then the total creation must be due to the total mind projecting itself out. The total mind includes not only the world of man, but also that of the entire kingdom of creatures, which have in them at least a rudimentary mind. This, the total mind concept, is indicated by the term *Hiranyagarbha* or *Prajapathi*. Subjectively, it becomes nothing other than the " Creative Potential " that is already in us as living beings.

That which is *Prajapathi* in the macrocosm (*Samashti*), is itself the " Creative Power " in the microcosm (*Vyashti*). As we cannot have thoughts without desires, and as without thoughts there cannot be either a mind or a world of perceptions, desire is the very motive-force which faithfully induces the " powers of the creative urge " to manifest. This idea is clearly brought out in the *Prasnopanishad* by the *Rishi* Pippalada.

> * **He replied, " Prajapathi the Lord of the creatures, decided to perform penance and having performed penance, He created a pair—Matter (*Rayi*) and Energy (*Prana*), thinking that they would together between them produce creatures in many forms.**

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* तस्मै स होवाच, प्रजाकामो वै प्रजापतिः
स तपोऽतप्यत स तपस्तप्त्वा स मिथुनमुत्पादयते ।
रयिं च प्राणं चेत्येतौ मे बहुधा प्रजाः
करिष्यत इति ।

(Pr. Up., Q. I — 4)

With the hope of fulfilling his great desire to create a multiple world, it is explained here how at first, in any given cycle of creation, the Cosmic Mind comes to function Itself in the same field, at once as two great factors called Matter and Energy — Matter as the outer envelopments, constituting the mass and girth of things and beings, and Energy (*Prana*) as the vitality or dynamism that makes the world vibrate with activity.

This idea, fortunately for us, has become very easy to comprehend, since we are the children of this Atomic Age. From the stand point of *Vedanta*, the *Prana* is not, strictly speaking, to be defined as energy, as it is known to us and is defined by our professorial men of material wisdom. Yet, even this definition helps us a lot to understand the concept of it at least to a slight degree. But it is not enough, and so, the *Rishi* further explains that *Prana* means energy which makes *matter* exist and function as though vibrant with vitality, and indicates in the following stanza that *Matter* means not only that which has form, but even that which has no form.

> * **The Sun is verily life, and the moon is matter; all that has form and all that is formless is matter and therefore form indeed is matter.**

According to the *Rishis* even the formless thoughts and ideas are nothing but *matter*. This will be clear from an experiment with fasting; try it if you like. Forty-one days on a diet of one ounce of water every day, would clearly reveal to you that your thoughts and ideas are nothing but subtle by-products in the manufacture of the body, from the well-known raw material, food. The more we are famished, the less will be the mental throbbings, until at last they almost fall to a minimum. Later on, as we start taking in small quantities of food, the mind again takes up the thought strings to sob out the songs of its frenzy and restlessness. The *Rishis* are therefore perfectly right in declaring

* आदित्यो ह वै प्राणो रयिरेव चन्द्रमा
रयिर्वा एतत्सर्वं यन्मूर्तं चामूर्तं च
तस्मान्मूर्तिरेव रयिः ।

(Pr. Up., Q. I — 5)

that in their definition of *matter* all our thoughts and ideas are also incorporated.

"*Therefore form is indeed matter*" — the logic behind this statement may not be visible for a superficial reader. But it becomes very clear when he understands that the inner world of mind and intellect, which is nothing other than the feelings, thoughts and ideas, is a product of our impressions created in us because of the world of forms outside. The links of a chain made out of gold are all nothing but gold. Thoughts and ideas — and therefore, the mind and intellect — created and sustained because of the world of objects, cannot be anything other than the outer world.

Forms constitute matter. The formless world is controlled, regulated, sustained and governed by the outer world of forms. Therefore, the formless in our inner world is nothing other than the forms in the world outside — "*Form is indeed Matter*".

All matter is Moon; all energy is Sun. *Prajapathi* expresses himself as both matter and energy. The equation then solves itself to indicate that *Prajapathi* himself is the Moon and the Sun playing in the world as matter and energy, and thus has himself become everything else in us, except the *Atman !*

In *Vedanta* the entire world of Elements is divided into two groups; the gross and the subtle. The gross elements are fire, water and earth, and the subtle elements are space and air. The gross elements are called *Murtam* (with form) and the subtle elements are *Amurtam* (without forms).

We have already seen earlier how *Prajapathi* himself becomes the Sun and the Moon, and how the Sun is *Prana* (Energy) and the Moon is *Rayi* (Matter). In the following stanza we find the *Rishi* saying that the *Prana is the truth behind all those that have "forms" and all those that are "formless"*.

*** As the fire, life (*Prana*) burns. As the sun, life shines. As the clouds, life rains. As Indra, the *Prana* rules. It is the wind, it is the earth; it is the Moon, Deva. It is**

> both that which has "form" and that which is "formless".

This total Energy, *Prana* is the vital factor behind the fire, in that it makes it burn; behind the sun, the burning orb of light and energy is this Divine *Prana.* Therefore, the *Rishi* says in the next stanza that the entire universe rests and maintains itself in the *Prana.*

> ** As spokes in a wheel, in *Prana* (Energy) everything in the Universe is fixed. The *Rik Mantras*, the *Yajur Veda* and the songs of the *Sama*, all *Yagnas*, all dynamic activities (*Kshatriya*) and all spiritual endeavours (*Brahmana*), all rest in the *Prana.*

The same idea described in the above two stanzas is brought into a greater relief in the following stanza from *Kathopanishad* in a more direct and scientific language.

> *** This whole universe evolved from the *Brahman*, moves (vibrates) in the *Prana.* The *Brahman* is a great terror like an uplifted thunderbolt. Those who know this become immortal.

Here *Prana* means the *Brahman*, the Eternal Reality, the one source from which the world of appearances has emerged out, in which it is existing and into which at the end of time it will merge back again.

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* एषोऽग्निस्तपत्येष सूर्य एष पर्जन्यो मघवानेष वायुरेष
पृथिवी रयिर्देवः सदसच्चामृतं च यत् ॥
(Pr. Up., Q. II—5)

** अरा इव रथनाभौ प्राणे सर्वं प्रतिष्ठितम् ।
ऋचो यजूंषि सामानि यज्ञः क्षत्रं ब्रह्म च ॥
(Pr. Up., Q. II—6)

*** यदिदं किञ्च जगत् सर्वं
प्राण एजति निःसृतम् ।
महद्भयं वज्रमुद्यतं
य एतद् विदुरमृतास्ते भवन्ति ।
(Kat. Up., Sec. VI-2)

Creation and the worlds created are considered by many of the Indian philosophers as so many "stresses" in the Infinite. Modern Science has also come to a similar conclusion that the world of matter is entirely constituted of energy-units moving at a terrific speed in their eternal vibrations. When the atom was *split, the physicists could discover that it was* constituted of *electrons and protons moving* at a high velocity, around and *about a central neutron. They also* found out that if by some *method they could change* the frequency of vibration of the *energy-particles* in the electronic vibrations in an element, they *could change one* element into another! If atoms are nothing but *energy* particles vibrating, and matter is nothing but a mass of *molecules*, then matter is nothing but energy vibrating!

Therefore it cannot be very difficult to accept the statement of the *Mantra*, that "creation is a motion, a vibration of energy", and that it is possible for the vibration to maintain itself only if there is a motionless and non-vibrating medium, the Absolute Reality. Constant vibration of energy in a medium of Absolute Energy maintaining itself within the field of a constant axis, gives us the notion of sense-objects made up of things and beings. If such a Supreme Reality were not there to make existence possible, but also to control and govern it and thus ensure its smooth functioning, we would not have had such a systematic consistency in the laws of Nature.

Nothing in this Universe happens haphazardly. Nature moves in a rhythm. There is an immutable law that governs the movement of the stars, planets etc. There is a constancy in the working of all the laws of nature. Every thing is scheduled to happen according to some strict commands, as though there is a severe lawmaker and a strict maintainer of these laws! In this sense, the scriptures state here that the finite world of names and forms seems to exist and function so diligently and readily as though the Master of the laws is standing right behind it with a raised whip!!

The *Mantra* on the whole indicates that the source of all manifestations is not an inert non-existence, but that the ultimate source of all is an active and dynamic existence, which in its nature

is Pure Intelligence itself. How this Supreme Intelligence becomes the manifested world and the activities therein, is explained in the following *Mantra* from the *Mundakopanishad*.

> * From the *Brahman* (the Supreme Reality)—who not only is aware of the total happenings in the world but is equally in the know of all the details of every minute happening and whose very thought is of the nature of Knowledge,—are produced all these: the Creator, names-and-forms and nourishment for all.

The Supreme Reality, the Uncaused Cause, is nothing but Pure Wisdom and as such, It is *generally* aware of the large happenings in the entire cosmos. It being the light of Consciousness that illumines every mental wave in the animal and human life, and It being the Existence Principle in every thing that is, there cannot happen anything which is not directly under the light of Pure Knowledge, nor can anything exist but in the lap of Pure Existence. Thus, the Supreme Reality being by nature Absolute-Existence-Knowledge, knows everything, and It knows every detail of all that it knows; so says Mother *Sruti*.

We have already dealt with the theory of how the Supreme Reality through a process of brooding invoked the creative power that was already there, and swelling with the joy of creation, started the game of creation in Himself, by projecting a world by Himself, out of the very substance of Himself ! The Supreme Consciousness, the Reality, working through the mass of *Vasanas*, in which state the world was existing at the time of creation, becomes a personality, the Cosmic Person (*Purusha*) that is capable of desiring, willing and wishing. He creates conducive worlds wherein all the *Vasanas* can find an efficient field to fulfil themselves.

Thus we have the following statements in the "*Purusha Sooktam*".

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* यः सर्वज्ञः सर्वविद् यस्य ज्ञानमयं तपः ।
तस्मादेतद् ब्रह्म नाम रूपमन्नं च जायते ॥
(Mu. Up., Ch. I, Sec. I-9)

*** Whatever is born now, and whatever is yet to be born in future, all are He alone; not only this (*Utha*), even for the Gods (*Amrutattwasya*) He is the controller; and hence He transcends (*atirohati*) the mortal state (*annena*).**

Whatever was, is, and will be, in the three periods of time, can only be the expression of the Lord, the One Reality. Nothing witnessed by the dreamer at any time in his dream, can ever be anything other than his own mind of the waking state. The Lord expressing through the gross forms is the " Universe ".

The word " universe " at this point does not mean the cosmos as revealed to us in our present state of awareness. The " universe " as applied here includes also the higher planes of existence — heaven and its denizens, etc. The Gods (the elemental forces), that express through the phenomena, Air (*Vayu*), Fire (*Agni*), Sun (*Surya*), Moon (*Chandra*), etc., are conceived in the *Vedic* lore as Celestial Deities, are also " ordered " by the *Purusha*, who is Himself the Universe, is Himself again the very Controller or Ruler (*Esanah*) of the powers of the phenomena (*Amrutattwasya*).

In fact, matter has no control over the mighty forces of phenomena. If the *Purusha*, the Cosmic Person *were only the universe-of-forms, He would be nothing but the Total Matter, at once inert, dead, and insentient*. To avoid this misconception which might arise in the student's mind, the *Rishi* declares that " the *Purusha* is the controller of the very Gods ".

Supposing you are " dreaming " of a vast silent jungle along a noisy river, which by evening witnesses a ferocious storm, that lashes and heaves, rendering the river angry, flooded and devastating. The dream-world of objects is constituted of the mind, as they

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* पुरुष एवेदं सर्वं
यत्भूतं यच्चभव्यं
उतामृतत्वस्येशानः
यदन्नेनातिरोहति ॥

(Pu. Soo.—2)

all are only projections of the mind, and therefore the *force* of the floods, the *might* of the storm, the *blaze* of the lightning, the *roar* of the thunder, the smashing lash of the flood-waters, the heavy tread of the angry storm — all these are also forces borrowed from the waking-state-mind. So too is the total Universe, and the *Purusha*, at once the Lord of Cosmic-forces therein.

But at the same time, it should be understood that the Supreme has not modified Himself to become the mortal world of endless changes and gruelling pains. Had He become the universe, He too would have become finite and so, perishable. To explain this idea of apparent illusion of " becoming " (creation), the *Veda* in the following *Mantra* explains that only a quarter of Him has become the universe.

> * **This much is His Glory only. *Purusha* is much more than all these. The entire universe of happenings (*Visva*) and creatures (*Bhootani*) constitute but a quarter (*Pada*) of Him. The remaining three quarters (*Tripada*) of His Glory consists of the Immutable Consciousness.**

The universe of names and forms, that was in the past, that is in the present and that will come to manifest in all the future, together expresses but a quarter of His Infinite Glory (*Mahima*). It is only this fractional aspect in Him which is apparently finite, pain-ridden and imperfect. Only a limited area of the desert can confuse the traveller with the illusion of a mirage.

Thus, only " one quarter " portion of Him has become the Universe (*Jagat*), and the other three-quarters of Him ever remains as the immutable (*Amritam*) Light-of-Consciousness (*Divi*). The use of the term " fraction " here is not to make up *the arithmetic of Vedantic thought, but only to communicate to*

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* एतावानस्य महिमा
अतोज्यायांश्च पूरुषः
पादोऽस्य विश्वा भूतानि
त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि ॥

(Pu. Soo.—3)

the spiritual student the idea that the wide vast universe of incomprehensible distances, mass, velocity, power and speed, is but a fractional portion of the Infinite All Pervading Reality. All gold ornaments that are now existing in this world are made of gold; yet all of them together can represent but a fraction of the total existing gold.

The *Rishi* continues the readily comprehensible idea of a "part and the whole" relationship between the finite world and the Infinite Lord. The larger portion (the three quarters) rises above the universe-of-change — constituted of objects-emotions-and-thoughts — and ever remains in all its Eternal Purity and Perfection. The realm of cause-effect relationship cannot ever affect the Infinite. Therefore the *Rishi* says :

> * **The three-quarters of the *Purusha* extends beyond the universe of change. The one-quarter of Him, again and again, comes to play as the Universe. Thereafter, He pervades all beings that eat and things that never eat.**

After indicating this resplendent state of Pure Consciousness, the *Rishi* draws our attention to the quarter-part which plays the game of the universe. This quarter, by its own deliberate will, embraces the "delusion" (*Maya*) of mind-intellect, and plays the game of Creation-Existence-Destruction of the finite world. This is done again and again.

With reference to the projection of the universe and its re-absorption at the end of the *Kalpa*, into the state called *Pralaya*, and again its re-emergence into expression at the beginning of the following *Kalpa*, the *Rishi* says, "again and again" *Punah Punah*.

It has been already explained that the entire universe arose from a "quarter" of the All-pervading. Therefore, before creation took place, this "quarter" must have been as peaceful

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* त्रिपादूर्ध्वं उदैत पुरुषः
पादोऽस्येहाभवात् पुनः
ततो विष्वङ् व्यक्रामत्
साशनानशने अभि ॥

(Pu. Soo.—4)

and quiet as the other "three quarters" of the Infinite. It is clear that the "quarter" from which the universe emerges, must get somehow "disturbed" in order that it may start its self-projection. This disturbance is nothing but the total unfulfilled *Vasanas* of the previous *Kalpa* exerting themselves to express as the pattern, condition and nature of the world emerging from the disturbed "quarter" of the Infinite.

When we read here the words "He created" we must understand that He could only have created it all out of Himself, as there was none else but He alone before the creation. Just as we spin our dreams only out of ourselves, triggered by our own mental suppressions and psychological associations, which we had collected during our waking state hours during our transactions therein, so too, do the total unfulfilled *Vasanas* of the previous *Kalpa* determine the pattern, condition and nature of the world emerging from the Infinite.

The Supreme, identifying with the total *Vasanas*, is the "Lord of the universe"—(*Iswara*); when He expresses with the Total-mind-intellect, He is identified as the "Creator of the Universe"—"*Hiranyagarbha*"; and when He projects forth the Total-Gross-Body, He comes to play as the Universe (*Virat*).

> *** From the *Purusha* (*Tasmaat*) was born the *Virat*, the Universe-in-seed (*Brahmandam*) and identifying with *Virat*, the "Universe-in-seed" condition, the *Virat Purusha* was born. The new born becomes manifest (*Sa-jaato*) into the plurality. Then He (created) the earth and the bodies.**

Disturbed by the total motivational factors behind the uni-verse-to-be, the *Virat*, the universe-in-seed-form (*Brahmandam*) came to manifest. Identifying with this "*Brahmandam*", [illegible]

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* तस्माद्विराडजायत
विराजो अधिपूरुषः
स जातो अत्यरिच्यत
पश्चाद् भूमिमथो पुरः ॥

out of the total *Vasanas* (*Maya*), the *Purusha* became the *Virat-Purusha*.

At this stage this " Universe-in-seed-form " is described as a misty, undifferentiated mass; and *Virat-Purusha*, with the help of *Maya*, the total-mind-intellect-equipment, became the creator of the solid earth, the " field for all experiences " and the endless varieties of forms (bodies) with which different sets of *Vasanas* can exhaust themselves through the required experience fulfilments.

As if summarising the process and the sequence of creation explained so far, the following *Mantra* from the *Prasna Upanishad* says :

> ***He created *Prana*; from *Prana* the Faith, *Akash*, Air, Fire, Water, Earth, Senses, Mind, Food, Strength, Thought, *Mantra*, *Karma* and the world, and in the world the different names also.**

First in order to create, there must be the ego-centric Energy, the *Prana*, which is the stuff on which the entire apple cart of life is rolling. But this Energy, creative in dynamism, constructive and destructive in potentiality, can come to play and express itself only when it is self-conscious. If the self-consciousness as expressed in terms of its own faith in itself, is not truly wedded to itself, the *Prana* can neither create nor manifest any of its component parts, which alone constitute the vehicle for the ego to play its endless drama of death! Thus, after *Prana* comes a faith in itself or a consciousness of its own potential-strength.

When thus a self-conscious Energy comes to play out, the rudiments of the mind are born first in the concept of Space (*Akash*) and the other four Great Elements constituting together the five macrocosmic Elements. These very Elements expressing themselves in the microscosm, have already become the ten sense-

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* स प्राणमसृजत प्राणाच्छ्रद्धां खं वायुर्ज्योतिरापः
पृथिवीन्द्रियं मनः। अन्नमन्नाद्वीर्यं
तपो मन्त्राः कर्म लोका लोकेषु च नाम च ॥

(Pr. Up., Q. VI—4)

organs in us. To recapitulate therefore, (1) *Prana*, (2) Faith, (3-7) the five Great Elements, (8) the senses.

When these 8 items come to play, the one focal point for all of them becomes the mind. The mind gets crystallised in the beaker of the Universe, growing in its sharp cornered challenges; the sense organs receiving their impulses fatten the *mind*. When thus, (9) a mind is formed, which is regularly provided with experiences of an outer world of plurality, made up of the five elements, nature has to provide the mind with its nourishment. So the next in the serial of creation is (10) food. The food taken in gets digested to become (11) the strength.

We now have at this stage of the evolution, the mind which is fed from outside with challenges and from within food. The mind so fattened and energised, erupts out its (12) thoughts. Thoughts can either run into disintegrated wastefulness or can be conserved and directed in any right channel of thinking. Every human being, whether he is consciously training himself or not, has one solid trait of mental character which is determined by the pattern towards which his thoughts gravitate in their general formation and flow.

Under such a scheme of things, the individual gains an ability to direct and maintain his thoughts in a chosen line, consistently for long, and this ability (*[illegible]*) is indicated here by the term (13) *Mantra*.

Thoughts, classified and marshalled through constant reflection (*Mananam*), order the mind into a definite pattern, and this determines the texture, efficiency, [illegible] and quality of actions. Thought [illegible] in the mind [illegible]. Thus (14) *Karma* evolves out of the thought pattern [illegible]; the "advocate-mantra" makes one a lawyer and the "[illegible]-*mantra*" makes another ultimately a [illegible].

As the *Karma* certainly is, so is the [illegible] world created as a result of the activities. If the thoughts are [illegible], the actions will be criminal and immoral, and such a [illegible] would be [illegible] after creating for himself a world of [illegible] of [illegible] and [illegible]

doors, of lock-picking and day-sleeping. According to the world created by our actions there are the (16) different names; we are named as advocates or criminals, doctors or killers, judges or jail-birds, contractors or collectors — according to our actions.

Thus there is, in fact, a beautifully scientific and highly intelligent connection between all the 16 items enumerated in the *Brahmana.* They form the 16 facets of the same great *Purusha.* From the *Purusha* to the *Kalaas* is the direction of the seeming fall of the Infinite to finitude, the story of God's devolution to become the self-arrogating man.

5

Emergence of Man

We have seen so far that the same Supreme Truth functioning as the Spirit and matter brings forth the expression of the world as well as the individual who lives gathering his experiences in the world. It is very well known to students of science that the world-of-matter is uniformly the same everywhere. The minerals, the liquids and the gasses—each group true to its own properties—are the same everywhere. The spiritual masters at all times have uniformly declared that the vitalising principle in matter is the Spirit, and this Spirit is universally the same everywhere. It is all-pervading and eternally dynamic. [illegible] we are asked to believe that when the One Truth [illegible] the world-of-matter (which is also homogeneously the same) the varieties that constitute the universe arise. Obviously this contains in itself an inexplicable apparent paradox.

Science does not provide us with any satisfactory explanation for the innumerable varieties that we meet with in the world. There are evident distinctions in nature between the kingdom of plants or of animals and the world of man. [illegible] species we observe a variety of specimens; no two of them are

to express the same features, either physical or mental. Therefore some other explanation is necessary for the endless varieties, if we have to accept the idea that the one Spirit, enveloped in the same matter, could prouuce such a heterogeneous multiplicity.

According to *Vedanta* the whole universe is nothing but Consciousness, the Self. The perceived objects and the perceiving equipments are all stresses in Consciousness. "A stress in consciousness is a thought". A continuous stream of thoughts maintained within us, provides us with the delusory expression of the mighty and powerful "mind". Through the mind, we see the world of objects, emotions and thoughts — projected upon the Consciousness — which can therefore be considered as so many different types of "stresses" (*Gunas*) in Consciousness. Therefore the entire world of names-and-forms is nothing but the expression of the permutations and combinations of these *Gunas* (stresses), which in their totality is called "*Prakriti*".

When the same Ganges water is poured into a hundred kinds of bottles, each one will look different from the other, not because the waters are different but because of the shape and colour of each bottle. These are but qualities of the bottle, born out of the material of the bottle. When the same water is seen through the bottle containers the properties of the bottles get super-imposed upon the contents; the blue water, the yellow water, the fat-water, the lean water *etc.* Similarly, the One Eternal Principle, when it expresses through the various matter equipments, appears as different entities, even though the elements that constitute matter are one and the same everywhere; this is only because of the "*gunas* born of *Prakriti*", the *Sattwa,* the *Rajas* and the *Tamas.*

The world of objects, of ideas, of thoughts and of actions together constituting the total *matter* is of the *Gunas,* and the three *Gunas* are together called in *Vedanta* as *Prakriti* or *Maya,* the cause of the Universe, as explained in the following stanza from *Bh. Geeta.*

> *Animating My *Prakriti* I again and again send forth this helpless multitude of beings by the force of Nature (*Prakriti*).

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* प्रकृतिं स्वामवष्टभ्य विसृजामि पुनः पुनः ।
भूतग्राममिमं कृत्स्नमवशं प्रकृतेर्वशात् ॥ (Ge. Ch. IX — 8)

We have already found that the greatest scoundrel and the noblest saint appear both the same when neither of them is identifying with his mind and intellect, in the state of deep sleep. On waking up, the scoundrel-mind projects a scoundrel; and the saintly-mind projects the saint; but the vitality behind both is the same Spark-of-life. Thus, the scoundrel is incapable of not behaving as anyone other than a scoundrel, as much as the saint cannot by any chance play the scoundrel even for a moment. The saint is as helpless as the scoundrel, both being helplessly under the sway of "*gunas* born of *Prakriti*" in each.

Similarly the adjunct of the God-principle, the total body-mind-intellect equipment, constituting the lower nature of the Self, called *Prakriti*, gets projected at the beginning of a cycle, and at the end of the cycle (*Kalpa*) they all go back to *Prakriti*. This act of invigorating or fertilising the *Prakriti* to grow up again into the world of things and beings, is an act of grace of *Brahman*. If the Supreme Lord were not to identify with *Prakriti* (*Maya*), She being inert herself, cannot project forth any life at all. The entire multitude of *Vasanas*, "I project again and again". When the Self animates *Prakriti*, the *Vasanas* have no freedom at all to refuse expression, because, they are helplessly under the sway of *Prakriti*.

But, in the case of the Eternal animating its *Prakriti*, and projecting out "Again and again the multitude of beings", there is neither any attachment (*Raaga*) nor any aversion (*Dwesha*) and therefore, by this mere happening in the Eternal, the Supreme is not affected. However tragic and murderous the play may be, however fearful and sad the story be, however rainy and stormy the scene be, the white screen in the cinema hall, at the end of the play, carries neither the stains of the blood spilt, nor the marks of the tears shed, nor the wear and tear due to the storms that raged. At the same time, we all know that but for the changeless screen, the story could never have been unravelled through the medium of light and shade. In the same way, the changeless Infinite, the Self, becomes the enduring platform for the drama of sorrow that is expressed in the language of finitude, ceaselessly enacted by the infinite number of egos, infinitely

repeating the parts ordered by their *Vasanas*, gathered by them in the past.

The needle in the gramaphone is not responsible for the song that the record sings. As the record, so the music. Similarly, the Self, the source of all dynamism, is unmindful of the type of world projected forth. Nor is it anxious in any sense of the term, to create a better world. Sunlight illumines whatever happens to be there in its light, be it a murder, or be it a martyrdom. Neither the glory of the martyr, nor the crime of the murderer can affect the Sun. The Self, as Pure Consciousness, illumines the *Vasanas* and lends them the power to project out, be it for the damnation of themselves or for their own glorification. "*Sitting like one indifferent and unattached to* these acts" the Self revels in the realm of its "lower nature" (*Prakriti*).

The rays of the Sun warms up the objects upon which they fall, without warming the intervening medium through which they pass. Similarly, the Self remains in its own Infinite glory, and the non-Self gets dynamised to act, as *Prakriti*, in the mere "*presence*." of the Self.

> *** Under Me as her Supervisor, *Prakriti* (Nature) produces the moving and the unmoving; because of this, O Kaunteya, the world goes on.**

The continued dance of the world-of-plurality to the rhythm of change is maintained in the "presence" of the Self; "*The world whirls round because of this*". In the final analysis, the Self does nothing. It is the *Prakriti* that projects and executes. It is the *Prakriti* that gets animated in the proximity of the Self. It is the Light of the Self that vitalizes the *Prakriti* and makes her exist and act. "*Nature, while I preside, gives birth to the world of things and beings*"— "Nature" here means the *Unmanifest* that gets projected forth as the manifest.

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* मयाध्यक्षेण प्रकृतिः सूयते सचराचरम् ।
हेतुनानेन कौन्तेय जगद्विपरिवर्तते ॥

(Ge. Ch. IX—10)

Subjectively viewed, this concept becomes more clear. The Self, *Atman*, merely by its "presence" illumines the mind and intellect and creates for the expression of their *Vasanas* an entire field of world-of-objects and the required instruments of exprience, constituted of the organs-of-perception and the organs-of-action. *Vasanas* are the tendencies and impressions left behind by the marching thoughts and actions upon the fields of the intellect. These tendencies or *Vasanas* gurgle forth as desires and wishes and they order and control the type of thoughts, and their direction of flow, in the human personality. The mind-intellect which is the thought flow, is caused by the *Vasanas* and the mind-intellect equipment decides in its turn the type of body and the nature of the environment in which it must come to function. Thus if the cause of action be thoughts, the thoughts themselves are ordered by desires; therefore, the cause of the desires, the very *Vasanas*, naturally form the subtlest aspect in any individual. Hence *Vasanas* form the *causal*-body in man.

> *** Inexplicable, beginningless and in the form of *Avidya* (ignorance of the Reality), the cause or the seed for the other two bodies (the subtle and the gross), ignorant of one's own real nature (Self), unqualified in form and free from thought-modification — is the *Kaarana shareera*, the causal body.**

The causal body (*Kaarana shareera*) has been qualified here by Shankara as indescribable. A thing that exists and which can be an object of our perception or feeling or thought alone can be formed in expressions and explained or described. But the *Causal body* which is the cause for the instruments of perception, feeling and thought, cannot be brought fully within our experience and hence the difficulty to explain it.

Again, *Anaadi* (beginningless) is a description of this *causal body*, which the students of *Vedanta*, in their early stages of study find very difficult to accept and assimilate. But luckily for us

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* अनिर्वाच्यानाद्यविद्यारूपं शरीरद्वयस्य कारणमात्रं
सत्स्वरूपाज्ञानं निर्विकल्पकरूपं यदस्ति तत्कारणशरीरम् ।

(Tat. Bdh.)

revelation of Modern Science has thrown a clear light upon this concept.

Time according to modern scientists is " the interval between events ". In our text-books of philosophical thoughts a more vivid definition is given, which perhaps has a closer personal appeal: *Time is the interval between any two experiences.* To have an experience three factors are necessary: the *Experiencer* (*subject*), the *Experienced* (*object*) and the right relationship established and maintained between the subject and the object, called the *Experiencing.* Thus the mind-intellect instrument, the Experiencer, must have a world-of-objects, the Experienced, to establish the condition of Experiencing, to have the first experience.

At a single point A, there is no distance to measure; from point A to any point B there is a distance. When the first experience ends at the rise of a different experience, then alone can the concept of the first unit of time appear in our comprehension.

Even for the first experience, where " time " is impossible, we need the equipments of the intellect, mind and body, with a world of objects to perceive at, to feel for and to think upon. Thus, even before " time " was perceived the created world has come out, and to perceive it, the equipments of knowledge also must have been created. *Vasanas* constitute the causal body for the subtle and gross envelopments; therefore, it cannot be qualified or measured by " time " which is its own by-product.

This " causal body " is *Avidya*, ignorance, in as much as it is this ignorance of an eternal spiritual perfection that has given us our gurgling desires in the intellect, thoughts in the mind and actions through the body. Due to the non-apprehension of Reality, man recognizes the world of objects, emotions and thoughts. Through the body, mind and intellect he contacts the world and creates more and more *Vasanas*. These *Vasanas* make one act more and more, and in the end, man becomes cocooned in them gaining permanently for himself the sense of a separate individuality, the *Jeevabhava*. All these are created by *Avidya,* the "causal body " of the individual.

To be in the causal state is to be in the causal body: the tree in the seed is in its causal condition. Under favourable circumstances the unmanifested tree in the seed can manifest. But in the seed it is unmanifest and is in its causal condition.

In the deep-sleep the Self expresses through the *causal body;* therefore, there is no manifestation of life as thoughts or emotions or feelings. This condition of the Self functioning through the *causal-body* when the individuality in us is in the causal condition, is called the deep-sleep-state-of-consciousness.

> * **This "Unmanifest" described as a combination of all the three *Gunas*, is the causal-body of the individual. Its special state is deep-sleep, in which all the functions of the mind-intellect and the sense organs are totally suspended.**

When a man is in deep-sleep, all the activities of his intellect, mind and the sense-organs are temporarily at rest. This state is known as the state of the unmanifest (*Avyakta*), because neither the Reality, nor the world of objects-emotions-thoughts is manifest and available for his cognition. Complete " ignorance " is the characteristic of this state. The content at this level of pure complete ignorance and total non-apprehension is the causal-body.

When the individual withdraws himself from the waking and dream states of consciousness, he is said to be in deep-sleep state. The waking state and the dream state experiences are present in the deep-sleep state in the unmanifest or the seed form. These seeds, when manifest at the subtle and gross levels, give rise to the dream state and waking state respectively.

The " unmanifest " in the microcosm is the *Vasanas* in the individual, which put together in its macrocosmic form is *Maya,*

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* अव्यक्तमेतत्त्रिगुणैर्निरुक्तं
तत्कारणं नाम शरीरमात्मनः ।
सुषुप्तिरेतस्य विभक्त्यवस्था
प्रलीनसर्वेन्द्रियबुद्धिवृत्तिः ॥

(VC — 120)

which is the vehicle of the Supreme when He functions as *Iswara.* When the Supreme functions through the *Vasanas* or *Avidya* (*Microcosmic Maya*), it becomes the *jeeva* — the individual ego. When the Supreme functions through macrocosmic *Avidya* (*Maya*), He is *Iswara.*

> *Nescience or *Avidya*(*Maya*)is also called the "Unmanifest", and is the power of the Lord. It is without beginning; it comprises the three *Gunas* and is superior to its effects. It is to be inferred only by one who has a clear intellect, from the effect it produces. It is this *Avidya* which projects the entire Universe.

One of the powers of the Omnipotent Lord *Parameswara* is to project Himself. This Divine power is called " the Unmanifest" and is the *causal-body.* This unmanifest power is otherwise called Nescience (*Avidya*).

Each individual creates his own world around himself due to his ignorance (*Avidya*), through his mind. The sum of each one's world put together is the total world which we call the Universe, the *Jagat.* Therefore, the total world, the Universe, is created by the total mind when expressing through the total *Vasanas,* otherwise called *Maya.*

At this stage every earnest seeker of Truth comes to wonder, and feel bewildered at the why and how of the perceived Universe. An explanation is given here by *Acharya* Shankara that the cause for the gross world is the *gunas,* the existence of which has to be inferred from the effects perceived as the world.

Science tells us that all gross matter in the Universe, in the ultimate analysis, is nothing but packets of energy in constant motion. Energy as itself cannot be perceived by the senses,

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* अव्यक्तनाम्नी परमेशशक्ति-
रनाद्यविद्या त्रिगुणात्मिका परा ।
कार्यानुमेयासुधियैव माया
यया जगत्सर्वमिदं प्रसूयते ॥

(VC — 108)

because of its subtlety, and so its existence has to be inferred only from the perceived effects it produces. Heat, light, electricity, magnetism *etc.*, are all energies in Nature which are not directly comprehensible to our perception and understanding. These can only be inferred by the effects they produce on our sense organs either directly or indirectly through their interaction with the objects in the world outside. Thus, the existence of electricity or magnetism has to be inferred from the effect produced in the electric bulb or on a piece of iron respectively.

Similarly when we try to observe the perceived world of objects, emotions and thoughts and analyse their behaviour, we can easily infer the fact that they are all expressions of the permutations and combinations of three subtle factors. These are the "grossness" aspect, the "dynamism" aspect and the "intelligence" or "Consciousness" aspect, called in *Vedanta* as *Tamas*, *Rajas* and *Sattwa* respectively. These three *gunas* together in unmanifested form is called *Maya* from which the entire universe has manifested.

Matter, as we now know it, is perceivable and so is gross. For everything gross there must be a previous subtle state of existence. Therefore, the gross matter is made up of its subtler components called in *Vedanta* as *Tanmatras*. These *Tanmatras* are each constituted of the three *gunas*. These *Tanmatras* or subtle elements are five in number corresponding to the perceivable five gross elements Space, Air, Fire, Water and Earth which together constitute the perceived gross world. The order and sequence in which these five subtle elements manifested from *Maya* is explained by Shankara as given below.

> * Depending on *Brahman* for its existence is *Maya*, which is of the nature of *Sattwa*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*; from that, *Akasa* (space) is born; from space, *Vayu* (the Air); from Air, the Fire; from the Fire, Water; and from water, the Earth.

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* ब्रह्माश्रया सत्त्वरजस्तमोगुणात्मिका माया अस्ति ।
तत. आकाशः संभूतः । आकाशाद्वायुः । वायोस्तेज. ।
तेजस आपः । अद्भ्यः पृथिवी ॥

(Tat. Bdh.)

First of all the subtlest of the elements, *Akasa* emerged from *Maya*, and from *Akasa* a grosser element the Air came; a still grosser element Fire came from the Air; and still more gross element Water manifested itself from the Air. The series ended with the grossest manifestation — the element Earth. These five subtle elements have been accepted as the fundamental factors that constitute the manifested world of matter, by almost all philosophers and scientists of the world. According to them the entire phenomenal world is an endless variety of combinations of these five great subtle elements.

These five elements are arranged in their order of grossness according to their qualities. *Akasa*, considered as the subtlest has only one quality, sound; we know that sound cannot be created where there is no space. The Air has the quality of sound and also its own special quality, the touch; and to that degree, Air is considered grosser than *Akasa.* The next in the series is Fire and it has the qualities of Space and Air apart from its own quality of *form.* Water, besides the qualities of the previous ones, namely sound, touch and form, has its own special quality of *taste.* And Earth the grossest of the lot has all the four qualities described plus its own special quality of *smell.*

Each of these five great elements, in their turn, is constituted of the three *Gunas* — *Sattwa*, *Rajas* and *Tamas* — since these three in their undifferentiated condition is *Maya*, the source of these five great subtle elements. Consequently each of these five subtle elements has in it the capacities of these three *Gunas.* Thus *Akasa* with its quality of *sound* has the capacity to express its *Tamasic* aspect as the gross element space, wherein its own quality of sound can express itself. Not only has *Akasa* the capacity to express as space wherein its quality of sound can manifest, but it has also the capacity to express as the instrument needed in the production of sound, the tongue, and also the instrument for knowing the sound, the ear, out of the *Rajasic* and *Sattwic* aspects. In short each of these five great subtle elements has the capacity to manifest itself as the object, the instrument and the condition needed to generate the experience, which in their totality forms the entire created Universe.

Thus from the *Sattwic* and *Rajasic* aspects of each of these five subtle elements, evolved each of the five organs of knowledge and also the corresponding organs of action.

> * From among these five great subtle elements, out of the *Sattwic* aspect of *Space*, is evolved the organ of hearing, the ear. From the *Sattwic* aspect of *Vayu* (air) is evolved the skin, the organ of touch. From the *Sattwic* aspect of Fire is formed the eyes, the organ of vision. From the *Sattwic* aspect of *Water* is formed the tongue, the organ of taste. From the *Sattwic* aspect of *Earth* came the organ of smell, the nose.

In the construction and working of the human instruments of cognition and action, we need not only a physical equipment but each must have its own special capacities. The gross "equipments" like the eyes or the mouth are, in Sanskrit, called the *Golaya* meaning, the organs of perception or expression. The special "sense-centre" situated in the brain corresponding to each sense-organ is called in Sanskrit the *Indriya*.

> *Among these five elements, from the *Rajas* aspect of *Space*, is evolved the organ of speech, the tongue. From the *Rajas* aspect of *Vayu* (Air) are born the hands. From the *Rajas* aspect of *Fire*, are evolved the legs. From *Rajas* aspect of Water, the genitals are evolved. From *Rajas* aspect of the *Earth*, the anus (the excretory organ) is evolved.

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* एतेषां पञ्चतत्वानां मध्ये आकाशस्य सात्विकांशात् श्रोत्रेन्द्रियं संभूतम् । वायोः सात्विकांशात् त्वगिन्द्रियं संभूतम् । अग्नेः सात्विकांशात् चक्षुरिन्द्रियं संभूतम् । जलस्य सात्विकांशात् रसनेन्द्रियं संभूतम् । पृथिव्याः सात्विकांशात् घ्राणेन्द्रियं संभूतम् । (Tat. Bdh.)

* एतेषां पञ्चतत्वानां मध्ये आकाशस्य राजसांशात् वागिन्द्रियंसंभूतम् । वायोः राजसांशात् पाणीन्द्रियं संभूतम् । वह्नेः राजसांशात् पादेन्द्रियंसंभूतं । जलस्य राजसांशात् उपस्थेन्द्रियं संभूतम् । पृथिव्या राजसांशात् गुदेन्द्रियं संभूतम् । (Tat. Bdh.)

These faculties in their aggregate, express through the gross body and establish the individual's contact with the world of objects around, from where he gains his own experiences of the world. The inlets that allow the stimuli to reach us, are called the organs-of-knowledge, because they perceive the world around us. These, the sense-organs, are the ears, the skin, the eyes, the tongue and the nose.

When the stimuli are received, we respond to them through our motor-organs which are also five in number. These are called the organs-of-action, as our responses expressed at the body level are our own reactions to the stimuli received. They are the organ of speech, the hands, the legs, the anus and the genital organ. Since they are the points at which the individual explodes into action while expressing his responses, they are called the organs of function.

> *** The ears, the skin, the eyes, the nose and the tongue are organs of knowledge, for they help us to gain knowledge of objects (stimuli, *vishayas*). The organ of speech, the hands, the legs, the anus and the genital organ are the organs of action since they have a tendency for work.**

The world of objects that are perceived is formed out of the stimuli received through the sense-organs, in the form of sounds, touches, forms, tastes and smells. Therefore it is evident that the perceived world is created by the " inner person " and not by the instruments of perception themselves. The inner equipment has different names, but they indicate only functional differences. In fact, the one and the same mental stuff, the inner-equipment, has different functions and so has different names.

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* बुद्धीन्द्रियाणि श्रवणं त्वगक्षि
घ्राणं च जिह्वा विषयावबोधनात् ।
वाक्पाणिपादा गुदमप्युपस्थः
कर्मेन्द्रियाणि प्रवणेन कर्मसु ॥

(VC — 92)

*** The "inner organs" are called, according to their functions, as the mind, the intellect, the ego and the *chitta;* mind, from its doubts and hesitations; intellect from its function of determining the truth of things; the ego in its identification with both these; and the *chitta* from its function of constantly illumining the things of its interest.**

After the description of the instruments of perception and action, we logically proceed to the subtle factors that constitute the "inner equipment" (*anthah karana*). These are of course constituted of thoughts only.

When the thoughts are in a state of chaos and agitation with doubts and despairs, they constitute the "mind". When the mind has determined its perceptions with reference to the memories of similar or dissimilar experiences in the past, in that condition of relative quietitude caused by such determination, it is called the "intellect". Willing, wishing, desiring, judging etc., are the functions of the intellect.

To have a doubt regarding any outer phenomenal factors and to come to a decision about it, are the two equal yoke-fellows in the process of intelligent living. The continuous process of this dual function gives us the experience of intelligent living, which man alone is capable of. But mere doubts and intellectual decisions cannot in themselves give an individual a comprehensive idea of the whole, unless they have a bond of synthesis between them. In our day-to-day experiences, we know that we are having that sense of oneness in us, in as much as in our day-to-day decisions we know that *our* doubts have been cleared by *our* intellect. In this process it is not very difficult for us to detect that the doubts and the decisions must belong to one and the same

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* निगद्यतेऽन्तःकरणं मनोधी-
रहंकृतिश्चित्तमिति स्ववृत्तिभिः ।
मनस्तु संकल्पविकल्पनादिभि-
र्बुद्धिः पदार्थाध्यवसायधर्मतः ॥
अत्राभिमानादहमित्यहंकृतिः ।
स्वार्थानुसन्धानगुणेनचित्तम् ॥ (VC — 93, 94)

individual.

Let me make it more clear; suppose my friend has some doubts on a problem of his life, and for the time being, he seems to lack the intellectual poise to come to a decision. But I hear his doubts and I come to a decision, very reasonable and wise. Now, here we have an example of the choking doubts in one's bosom and the clearest answer in another's bosom. In this case we cannot say that my friend shall experience the consolation of having reached the solution to the problem, because the solution lies in another's bosom. That is, unless one has the egocentric attitude that the doubt is *his* and the final solution is also *his*, he cannot come to experience the totality of the inner life, as every intelligent person should. Therefore we have to presume that there is in us, a " common denominator " both in our doubts and our decisions. This " common denominator " is the constant and consistent vanity in us, expressed as " my doubts " and " my decisions ". This vanity of the individual that arrogates to itself both the doubts and the decisions as its own, is called " the ego " which expresses in terms of " I " and " mine ".

Our doubts and our decisions constantly singing their breathless duet constitute an unbroken experience of intelligent living; this is not possible unless we are continuously aware of our doubts and decisions, and we fully experience them as *our* doubts and *our* decisions. In short, we must be aware of the mind the intellect and the ego. This Awareness or Consciousness playing upon the mind-intellect-ego is called " *Chitta* ". *Chitta* is that which constantly illumines our personality constituted of the mind, the intellect and the ego.

These four factors, *manas* (mind), *buddhi* (intellect), *ahamkara* (ego) and *chitta* constitute the inner equipment whose play through the organs of perception and action makes it possible for a person to come in contact with the world around him. Therefore, as a contrast to the outer equipments (*bahir karana*) these are called the inner equipment (*anthah karana*). Since the function of the *anthah karana* is associated with the function of knowing or experiencing, they are the expressions of the *Sattwic* aspects of the five subtle elements. And unless they are the effect of all

the *sattwic* aspects of all the five elements combined, they cannot come to experience the world of objects constituted of the same five elements in their gross form.

Therefore :

> *** From the total *Sattwic* aspect of these five great elements the *anthah karana* constituted of the *manas*, the *buddhi* the *ahamkara* and the *chitta* is evolved**

Even if the five organs of perception and action along with the *anthah karana* are placed in their conducive environment, perception cannot take place unless the Life-Force (*Prana*) acts with them. In philosophical terminology *Prana* stands for the manifested Life Energy which expresses itself in the various physiological functions. They are *Prana, Apana, Vyana, Samana* and *Udana*. (1) *Prana* is that life-force which controls and regulates the various activities of our sense-organs. (2) *Apana* is that faculty which maintains the excretory system of the body. (3) *Vyana* expresses Life's functions in the digestive system. (4) *Samana* distributes nourishment to all parts of the body. (5) *Udana* is the capacity to rise up and peep into fresh fields of knowledge, by which the existing wrong notions are removed by the newly acquired convictions and experiences; this is the capacity in us to evolve in or devolve upon our thoughts.

> *** One and the same *Prana* becomes *Prana, Apana, Vyana, Samana*, and *Udana* according to its functions and modifications, like gold, water etc.**

The term *Prana* is to be correctly understood as "the manifestation of life in our body" and not the mechanical breathing "in" and breathing "out". The five *Pranas* are the "five departments of life's activities". One life alone expresses itself

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* एतेषां पञ्चतत्त्वानां समष्टिसात्त्विकांशात्
मनोबुद्ध्यहंकारचित्तान्तःकरणानि संभूतानि ॥

(Tat. Bdh.)

* प्राणापानव्यानोदानसमाना भवत्यसौ प्राणः ।
स्वयमेव वृत्तिभेदाद्विकृतिभेदात्सुवर्णसलिलादिवत् ॥

(VC — 95)

in its five different moods, and each performs a different function in the body, just as each minister is in sole charge of a given department and yet all of them are expressions of the one government in power.

The *Prana* layer of the personality is that which holds the physical body and the inner subtle body together. The sense organs must be in contact with the inner equipment, and it is the *Prana* that maintains this vital connection. Since the *Prana* holds the subtle and the gross together, some commentators consider it to belong to the gross body, while others, to the subtle body.

The four inner equipments *(Anthah Karana)*, together with the five sense-centres (*Jnana-indriyas*) and five motor-centres (*Karma-indriyas*), constitute the different faculties of our personality. These faculties in their aggregate is called the *subtle-body*, which expresses through the *gross-body* and establishes the individual's contact with the world, wherein he gains his experiences. In the following stanza, Shankara sums up all the factors that constitute the subtle body.

> *** (1) The five organs-of-action such as the speech etc., (2) the five organs-of-perception such as the ears etc., (3) five *Pranas*, (4) the five elements starting with Space along with (5) the discriminative intellect, mind etc., and also (6) ignorance, (7) desire and (8) action — these eight entities together constitute the subtle body.**

The organs of perception, the organs of action and the five *Pranas* have already been discussed. The five elements in their subtle form, form the subtle body. The "discriminative intellect" is the term used to include all the factors constituting the

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* वागादि पञ्च श्रवणादि पञ्च
प्राणादि पञ्चाभ्रमुखानि पञ्च ।
बुद्ध्याद्यविद्यापि च कामकर्मणी
पुर्यष्टकं सूक्ष्मशरीरमाहुः ।

(VC-96)

nner-equipment. All these can express themselves only when here is non-apprehension of the Reality and this ignorance of he Spiritual Truth in the subjective personality is called *Avidya.*

When the true nature of a thing is not known, the human nind imagines things which are not there, and an individualised go sense arises when the universal oneness is not cognized. This ndividuality experiencing its own limitations comes to suffer a growing sense of restlessness and discontent. The human ntellect conceives and plans various possibilities by which the onfused ego can experience its unlimited true nature of perfection. These plans suggested by the intellect are called 'desires'.

Thus *Avidya* generates desires and desires expressed at the body level are called actions. These eight factors called here as the 'eight entities" in their totality constitute the subtle body.

Dream is the state of Consciousness when the Self functions exclusively through the subtle body. In the waking condition onsciousness expresses through the gross and subtle bodies. But the subtle body has its exclusive expression in the dream state of Consciousness, *i.e.*, it is the body in which we are when we lream.

> * **Dream is the state when this (subtle body) is distinctly in expression, where it expresses all by itself. In dream the intellect by itself revels as the agent of the experiences etc., due to the various impressions gathered by it in its waking state.**

Describing the dream the *Acharya* says that it is the mind ecognizing its own agitations at a time when the discriminating ntellect is partially doped with fatigue and sleep. What we ee in our dreams is the expression of the latent impressions

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स्वप्नो भवत्यस्य विभक्त्यवस्था
स्वमात्रशेषेण विभाति यत्र ।
स्वप्ने तु बुद्धिः स्वयमेव जाग्र-
त्कालीननानाविधवासनाभिः ॥

(VC—98)

(*Vasanas*) gathered by suppressions and repressions during the waking condition and the vivid experiences lived by us. In this great inner drama the mind tickled by its own memories, projects a world of objects wherein the dreamer lives his joys and sorrows.

The subtle body contains the latent urges in an individual and is therefore called the *Linga sareera.* "*Linga*" is a symbol of "something that is not yet revealed". This body made up of thoughts and their functions is composed of the five subtle elements which have not yet undergone the process of grossification.

> * **This subtle body —listen carefully —also called the *Linga Sareera* produced from the subtle elements is possessed of the inclinations(*Vasanas*), and it causes the individual to experience the fruits of his past actions. It is beginningless conditioning on the Self brought about by its own "ignorance".**

The subtle body along with its *vasanas* becomes the conditioning on the Self to create the sense of an imperfect individualised ego. *Vasanas* are the foot-prints of past thoughts and action left upon the personality. The impressions of the past provide the conditioning for our present thoughts by giving them their specific texture, quality and fragrance. The *Vasanas* erupt thoughts similar to the very thoughts that created them, which, flowing out from us, prompt our endless activities. Along with the *Vasanas* the subtle body causes the ego to experience the joys and sorrows of the world, which are rewards or punishments of actions good or bad, right or wrong, performed in the past.

The experience of pleasure or pain in this physical body is determined by our past *karmas.* Thought by thought, action by action, we had demanded the present body and mental equipment.

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* इदं शरीरं शृणु सूक्ष्मसंज्ञितं
लिङ्गं त्वपञ्चीकृतभूतसम्भवम् ।
सवासनं कर्मफलानुभावकं
स्वाज्ञानतोऽनादिरुपाधिरात्मनः ॥

(VC—97)

In fact, even while we are alive and acting here now, we are actually ordering the shape of the future life to be. With our own actions we give a blue-print to God ordering the exact shape of our destiny; according to the specification given, the body, the instrument of experience is built and handed over to each one of us by the All-merciful Omnipotent Divine Creator.

Thus to the *Jeeva* the subtle body is the instrument, and the gross body is the vehicle with which it comes in contact with and indulges in the world of objects.

> * Know this gross body to be the "shelter" for the individual to conduct all his dealings with the world outside just as a house is to a householder.

The man dwells in his house and goes out daily into the world to strive for his livelihood. After earning his means of existence he returns home to enjoy what he has earned and to rest awhile. Rested and refreshed under the security of his house, he moves out again the following day, full of energy, to meet the challenges of a new day. In the same way the ego moves out of the physical body to contact the sense-objects and returns to it to savour its joys and sorrows.

The joy or sorrow resulting from conducive or unconducive environments is not felt outside ourselves. It is always felt within, though indeed the objects are always outside. Therefore the mind has to go out to contact the objects, but, having contacted them, it returns to the individual's own heart to experience the consequent joy or sorrow.

Thus the physical body is not only an instrument for experiencing the world outside but also it is the shelter for the experiencer to return to. The world of waking experiences is available only when we are conscious of the physical body and when we express ourselves through its sense-organs. Therefore it is that the

* सर्वोऽपि बाह्यसंसारः पुरुषस्य यदाश्रयः ।
विद्धि देहमिदं स्थूलं गृहवद्गृहमेधिनः ॥

(VC—90)

"waking"–condition is the full expression of the gross body.

> *** The individualised ego identifying itself with this body, enjoys gross objects such as garlands, sandal-paste, women (or men) etc., of an endless variety by means of the sense-organs. Therefore this body has the greatest play in the waking state.**

The Self identifying with the gross body expresses itself as the perceiver and thereafter recognizes the world of objects as being other than itself. Expressing through the physical body and its sense-organs, the *Jeeva* gathers its quota of pleasures by indulging in sense objects.

This body, the harem of all our egocentric assertions and misunderstandings is the very seat of our vanities and possessiveness. All our *I-ness* and *my-ness* function from the headquarters of the physical body. This seat of all painful activities and ego-prompted criminalities against our own divine nature is described by the *Rishis* as the gross body.

> *** This body, the seat of delusion, expressing in terms of "I" and "mine", is termed by reputed sages as the gross body. The Sky, the Air, the Fire, the Water and the Earth are the subtle elements.**

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* बाह्येन्द्रियैः स्थूलपदार्थसेवां
स्रक्चन्दनस्त्र्यादिविचित्ररूपाम् ।
करोति जीवः स्वयमेतदात्मना
तस्मात्प्रशस्तिर्वपुषोऽस्य जागरे ॥

(VC—89)

* अहं ममेति प्रथितं शरीरं
मोहास्पदं स्थूलमितीर्यते बुधैः ।
नभोनभस्वद्दहनाम्बुभूमयः
सूक्ष्माणि भूतानि भवन्ति तानि ॥

(VC—73)

> * **The parts having united with the parts of the others (subtle elements) become gross, and become the cause for the formation of the gross body. Their subtle essence constitutes the sense-objects, five in number, such as sound, touch etc., which contribute to the enjoyment of the experiencer, the individual ego.**

Mention has already been made of the subtle elements and how they become the subtle body. Now we are told here how they by a process of mutual combination, condense to a grossness sufficient to become perceptible to the sense-organs. The process by which the subtle elements become the five gross elements, which are accepted even by the modern scientists as the units of matter in the world, is called in Sanskrit, *Pancheekaranam* a five-fold self-division and inter-combinations.

> * **If it is asked how this *Pancheekaranam* takes place, it is as follows:**
>
> 1. **The *Tamas* aspect of each of these five elements divides into two equal parts.**
> 2. **One half of each remains intact.**
> 3. **The other half of each gets divided into four equal parts.**
> 4. **Then to the intact half of one element, one-eighth portion from each of the other four elements gets joined.**
> 5. **The *Pancheekaranam* is complete.**

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* परस्परांशैर्मिलितानि भूत्वा
स्थूलानि च स्थूलशरीरहेतवः ।
मात्रास्तदीया विषया भवन्ति
शब्दादयः पञ्च सुखाय भोक्तुः ॥

(VC—74)

* पञ्चीकरणं कथम् इति चेत् । एतेषां पञ्चमहाभूतानां तामसांशस्वरूपम् एकमेकं भूतं द्विधा विभज्य एकमेकमर्धं पृथक् तूष्णीं व्यवस्थाप्य अपरमपरमर्धं चतुर्धा विभज्य स्वार्धमन्येषु अर्धेषु स्वभागचतुष्टयसंयोजनम् कार्यम् । तदा पञ्चीकरणं भवति ॥

(Tat. Bdh)

PANCHEEKARANAM

The process of Five-fold

Self-division and Inter-combinations

Stages	Space. 1	Air. 2	Fire. 3	Water. 4	Earth. 5	Description.
(i)						Tanmatras; each in itself.
(ii)						Tendency to divide into two equal parts.
(iii)						The split complete.
(iv)						One half remaining intact, the others split into 4.
(v)	3 4 5	1 3 4 5	1 2 4 5	1 3 5	1 2 3 4	Each half married with 4-bits borrowed from all others.

In the fourth stage of its development, each half *Tanmatra* combines with ⅛ th *Tanmatra* of all the other elements, constituting one unit of the gross element. Thus in the chart one half of Ether joins with four ⅛ th bits borrowed from the other elements, which then constitute one unit of the gross *Akasa* (Sky). Similarly the other gross elements Air, Fire, Water and Earth are also formed

Sky	=	$\frac{1}{2}$ S + $\frac{1}{8}$ A + $\frac{1}{8}$ F + $\frac{1}{8}$ W + $\frac{1}{8}$ E
Air	=	$\frac{1}{2}$ A + $\frac{1}{8}$ S + $\frac{1}{8}$ F + $\frac{1}{8}$ W + $\frac{1}{8}$ E
Fire	=	$\frac{1}{2}$ F + $\frac{1}{8}$ S + $\frac{1}{8}$ A + $\frac{1}{8}$ W + $\frac{1}{8}$ E
Water	=	$\frac{1}{2}$ W + $\frac{1}{8}$ S + $\frac{1}{8}$ A + $\frac{1}{8}$ F + $\frac{1}{8}$ E
Earth	=	$\frac{1}{2}$ E + $\frac{1}{8}$ S + $\frac{1}{8}$ A + $\frac{1}{8}$ F + $\frac{1}{8}$ W

This process is called *Pancheekaranam*. Out of the gross elements the physical body is formed, whereas the sense-objects of sound, touch, form, taste and smell are constituted of nothing other than the subtle *Tanmatras* of the rudimentary elements The gross elements provide the instruments for the enjoyment of the subtle elements. All these arrangements are made so that the ego-centre may experience a life of happiness or misery as directed by the store house of the *Vasanas*.

*** Made up of the gross elements formed by the combination of the subtle elements and ordered by the past actions, this gross body is the seat of experience for the Self. The state in which it perceives gross objects is its waking condition.**

The five elements that have undergone the process of *Pancheekaranam* are the very material with which all the gross bodies are made. They are fashioned out according to the result of the actions done in the past by the "indweller" of the given body

* पञ्चीकृतेभ्यो भूतेभ्यः स्थूलेभ्यः पूर्वकर्मणा ।
समुत्पन्नमिदं स्थूलं भोगायतनमात्मनः ।
अवस्था जागरस्तस्य स्थूलार्थानुभवो यतः ॥

(VC—88)

The gross body so formed is the hutment of experience, the temple of joy or the house of sorrow. The indweller of the body experiences his joys and sorrows only through his physical body. The state in which the ego making use of its physical body comes in contact with the world of objects and ekes out its joys and sorrows, is the " waking " condition of the *Jeeva.*

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Man Dissected

When the seers of the *Upanishads* took up an exhaustive study of man in their enquiries after the fundamentals in life, they had to dissect the individual personality layer by layer until they reached the core, the very spring of life in him. Just as a botanist examines a specimen flower, by stripping its petals and observes each part carefully and systematically, so too, the great master of the *Taittiriya Upanishad* pursued his observation and study of man. It is the only *Upanishad* wherein we get a complete attempt at an analysis of man as a vivid expression of Life. The man of the modern physiologist is mainly a "combustion engine", having a fleshy form which mechanically functions according to the fuel supplied! But to the *Rishis*, man has, besides his body, a life of feelings and emotions, a purposeful ideal to follow and some values to respect. On analysing man it is found that in his silent moments of physical, mental and intellectual satisfactions he has a deeper personality, full of impatience and urges, cravings and demands, too deep for words to express, and yet, too poignant to be ignored. This silent call from the depth of man to achieve, to fulfil and to identify with the entire life is the cry of the Spirit.

In the modern available philosophies of the world we rarely nd thinkers peeping into human existence beyond the outer ringes of the intellect. In fact we find that the modern age has lot of scientific data to give regarding its observations on the world outside and a fairly good amount of information about the body. No doubt the thinkers of the modern age have made some daring attempts to declare their observations regarding the mind; but even the best of them does not seem to have penetrated sufficiently deep to touch even the outer fringes of pure intellectual life. May be, there are some exceptional few; but the conclusions of the modern thinkers are rather hasty and vague, their arguements often weak and incomplete and their declarations generally uncertain and ill-defined.

After a full study of the available modern literature upon the personality of man, when a serious student turns his gaze to the wealth of details available in the *Upanishads*, he discovers with relief that, though the language may be unfamiliar and the style of expression rather tedious, in the descriptions of the *Upanishads*, there is a complete analysis, which strikes him as more scientific han Science could ever be. According to his conclusions, he clares man as nothing but a Spiritual Existence as it were, enveloped within concentric circles of matter with varying degrees



of intensity. He claims to prove that the innermost layer is the subtlest while the outermost one, the body, is the grossest matter envelopment around the Spirit

The *Atman* or the Self, the Life Centre, is represented in the above diagram by the sacred symbol "OM". This our Self, our Real Nature, is Omnipotent and Omniscient. This Spark-of-life has come to be, in a sense, enveloped by matter, and the various envelopments are called in *Vedanta* as "*Sheaths*". The term "*Sheath*" indicates that just as the sword and its sheath have no contact, so too, between the Eternal Divine Spark-of-life and the matter envelopments, there is no contact. It also indicates that in the presence of the Spirit alone will the inert matter coverings gain a similitude of life.

There are thus five distinct sheaths: (1) the *Food Sheath*, the outermost, (2) the *Vital-Air Sheath* lining it internally, (3) the *Mental Sheath* within and still interior, (4) the *Intellectual Sheath*, and lastly, (5) the *Bliss Sheath*, the subtlest of all.

Before we go into a detailed study of the composition and nature of the various sheaths, let me explain to you the philosophical implications of the term "interior". When we say one sheath is interior to the other, we only mean that the inner one is subtler than the outer. Again, the subtlety in philosophy is measured by its *pervasiveness* For example, suppose we have got a 4 cubic inch piece of ice. The area that it can cover when kept on a flat surface, is definite. But when it is melted, the water so formed can spread out over a larger area and hence, we would in philosophy say that water is subtler than ice. Supposing now we heat the water to its boiling point; then the steam so formed can spread itself out into the entire atmosphere of the room: and so, we would consider steam subtler than water.

ANNAMAYA KOSA (FOOD SHEATH)

That physical body which every one of us is fully aware of during our waking-state-of-consciousness, is termed as the *Food Sheath*. It is called so because it has come up from the essence of the food assimilated by the father. It exists because of the food

taken in; and it ultimately, after death, goes back again to the earth to become food for the growing vegetation. The physical structure, arising from food, existing in food and ultimately going back to become food, naturally is termed appropriately as Food Sheath. This idea is explained in the *Vedic Mantra* which says:

> * **All beings that exist on earth are born out of food. They thereafter live by food; again, they ultimately go back and merge to become food. So, verily, food is the basis for all creatures. On that ground it is called the medicament for all. Out of food all beings are born; having been born, they grow up by food. Food is that which is eaten by beings and also that which in the end eats them: therefore food is called *Annam*.**

According to *Vedanta* every physical sheath, be it in the human, animal, or plant life, is an instrument for eking out from the world situations a definite quota of experiences. The body provides for the time being, as it were a base for the mind and intellect to function from.

Thus, in the Food Sheath exist the five organs of perception and the five organs of action. The five sense-organs are the eyes, the ears, the nose, the tongue and the skin. The organs of action are the mouth, the hands, the feet, the genital organ and the organ of evacuation.

It is a well-known fact to all educated students that a creature cannot exist if the sense organs do not function in it. We may find a blind man living; we may meet with a man both blind and deaf; it is indeed very rare that we meet with one who is blind, deaf and dumb. It is sure that an individual will not live long if

* अन्नाद्वै प्रजाः प्रजायन्ते । याः काश्च पृथिवीं श्रिताः । अथो अन्नेनैव जीवन्ति । अथैनदपियन्त्यन्ततः । अन्नं हि भूतानां ज्येष्ठम् । तस्मात्सर्वौषधमुच्यते । सर्वं वै तेऽन्नमाप्नुवन्ति । येऽन्नं ब्रह्मोपासते । अन्नं हि भूतानां ज्येष्ठम् । तस्मात्सर्वौषधमुच्यते । अन्नाद्भूतानि जायन्ते । जातान्यन्नेन वर्धन्ते । अद्यतेऽत्ति च भूतानि । तस्मादन्नं तदुच्यत इति ॥

(Tai. Up., Ch. II, Sec. 2)

he be without sight, hearing, speech and the power of smelling !! Never can a body exist for long when it has lost more than three of its sense-perceptions.

There is a reason for it. The ego-centric concept has entered a physical form to gain its experiences from the outer world of circumstances. The inlets for the flow of experiences to the ego are the five sense-organs. Thus, if the five sense-organs are not functioning, the ego-centre cannot gain by that incarnation any experience for itself, and so, it should necessarily leave the body and seek yet another instrument for its mission. This idea is poetically explained in the *Aitareya Upanishad* thus:

> * The *Devatas* (divinities) so created fell head-long into the great restless sea (of change and finitude). Then He (the creator) subjected them to hunger and thirst. They said to Him, " Find out for us an abode wherein we may be established and may eat food (may earn our experiences) ".

The various Deities, *Agni, Vayu, Adithya, Dik, Chandrama, Mruthyu, Apah*, etc., are the presiding deities over the various localised functions of life in the human body. The word *Deva* is used here in its etymological meaning, derived from its root, which means (*Dyothanat*) " to illumine ". The capacity in the sense-organs to illumine the world of sense-objects is meant by the term *Devata* here.

Thus, these " gods "—meaning, the impulses-in-the-sense-organs to see, to hear, to smell, to touch, to taste, to speak, to reproduce, to die, etc.,—all those faculties were thrown into the

* ता एता देवता सृष्टा
अस्मिन् महत्यर्णवे
प्रापतंस्तमशनाया-
पिपासाभ्यामन्ववार्जत् ।
ता एनमब्रुवन्नायतनं
नः प्रजानीहि, यस्मिन् ।
प्रतिष्ठिता अन्नमदामेति ॥

(Ai. Up., Sec II-1)

world of plurality constituted of the sense-objects such as forms, sounds, tastes, touches, etc. Not only were they thrown into this veritable seething ocean of plurality and constant change, but they were also shot with the pains of hunger, at once irresistible and insufferable, to enjoy and fulfil themselves. Thus whipped up by these two impulses, they, as it were approached the Creator and demanded separate havens wherein they could each house themselves and function through their respective equipments. So the statement " *We may eat food* ".

Thus, the power-of-vision demanded not an ear or a tongue, but its specific instrument, the eyes, wherein it may function and enjoy the various forms and colours, and satisfy its hunger and thirst. Similarly, all the sense faculties demanded separate conducive fields, wherein they could eke out their satisfaction through enjoyment of their respective objects.

Further, the *Upanishad* says that in order that the sense faculties may function, the living bodies were created.

> * **He brought the form of a cow for them; they said, " Indeed, this is not sufficient for us ". He brought the form of a horse to them; they said, " This is not sufficient for us ".**
>
> ** **When He brought the form of a man to them, they cried, " Oh ! well done—indeed, man alone is the masterpiece—Verily, man is the thing best done ". He said to them " Enter into your respective abodes ".**

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* ताभ्यो गामानयत्ता
अब्रुवन्न वै नोऽयमलमिति।
ताभ्योऽश्वमानयत्ता
अब्रुवन्न वै नोऽयमलमिति।

(Ai. Up., Sec. II-2)

** ताभ्यः पुरुषमानयत्ता
अब्रुवन् सुकृतं बतेति।
पुरुषो वाव सुकृतम्
ता अब्रवीद्यथायतनं प्रविशतेति॥

(Ai. Up., Sec. II-3)

It is very well known in the Darwinian Theory of Evolution that the bipeds evolved from the quadrupeds. Thus, we must understand that by quoting the two instances, the cow and the horse, the *Rishi* hints at the entire process of evolution. In all the lower specimens of forms, the sense-organs could not enjoy as completely as they wished, and the only equipment where they could ultimately find a maximum field for complete conscious enjoyment was in the form of man

Therefore, the Creator evolved the most perfect physical form of the human which accommodates, apart from the sense-organs, the faculties for entertaining highly sensitive and poetic emotions, and for exhibiting an extremely powerful capacity to discriminate The sense organs in man, working under the sequestered shades of his widespread intellect, with its over-hanging emotions, can easily suck out the maximum possible experiences through the sense-organs.

All creatures must wait for millions and millions of years until Nature takes them step by step and moulds them into greater evolutionary equipments In all the lower strata of existence, evolution is not a conscious development on the part of the living entity, but an involuntary up-thrust received from the processes of Nature.

Millenia of years of growth, change and decay must pass before a rock becomes soil, the soil supports a tree, the tree bears fruit; and the chance fruit contributes towards the making of a human being Millions and millions of spermetozoa and ova are produced but only a few of them are united to create human beings. Of all the countless possibilities, to be born a human is a rare chance indeed. And having thus got the human form, what do we do with it ? Man, because of his mind and intellect equipment, is to an extent free from Nature in evolving himself. Man alone of all the species of the living kingdoms, can hasten his own evolution by co-operating with the great eternal scheme of things around him. Physically, he has evolved to perfection, and nature can do nothing more to improve upon him His next lap of evolution awaits him at the level of his mind and intellect, and this is a process in which Nature cannot help him at all, he

has to help himself.

With this *Sastraic* conclusion in mind, when the *Acharyas* take their pen to guide the generation, they must necessarily exclaim and conclude that there can never be a greater fool than the one who, having been blessed with a human birth and the necessary mental and intellectual equipments, does not intelligently invest them for the higher purpose of self-redemption and self-rediscovery. Therefore *Acharya* Shankara says:

> * **This body is essentially an instrument for realizing the *Paramatman*. He who does not constantly use it for liberating himself from the bondage born of beginningless ignorance but struggles to nourish it, is destroying himself.**

Every physical sheath, be it in the human, the animal or the plant life, is an instrument for its "mind and intellect" to eke out from the world of situations a definite quote of experiences. The body provides for the time being, as it were, a centre for the mind and intellect to function from. Identifying one's self with the body because of ignorance, one may behave as if one is the doer and the enjoyer, and use the physical body towards its own damnation. A drunken driver. identifying himself with his drunken hallucinations, may use his vehicle to drive recklessly and crash into a way-side tree !

The very same physical body could be made use of properly, by a discriminating intellect, when it serves the ego as an efficient vehicle to take it to the supreme Goal of evolution !

PRANAMAYA KOSA (VITAL AIR SHEATH)

So far the discussion and analysis was about the grossest

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* अनुक्षणं यत्परिहृत्य कृत्य-
मनाद्यविद्याकृतबन्धमोक्षणम् ।
देहः परार्थोऽयममुष्य पोषणे
यः सज्जते स स्वमनेन हन्ति ॥

(VC–83)

aspect of man namely the gross body. Having understood the same, any student would like to know as to how it is sustained and maintained. Thus we see the following question put to the Master in the *Prasnopanishad.*

> * **Then the son of Vaidarbhi, Bhargava, questioned the master: " Oh *Bhagavan*, how many factors (*Devas*) support the living being ? Which of them enlightens this ? Again, who among them is the greatest ? "**

The question is perfectly intelligent and extremely relevent when it asks as to who all are the *Devas* that support the body. In the question, the word *Deva* means only that factor which enlightens, and therefore, the question enquires as to what the instruments of knowledge or illumination in this physical body are. The body cannot exist without the sense-orgnas There is a reason for it. The ego-centric concept has entered a physical form to gain its experiences from the outer world of circumstances. The answer is given by the Master in the next two stanzas.

> ** **He replied, " These *Devas* are verily the Ether, the Air, the Fire, the Water, the Earth, the Speech, Mind, the Eye, and the Ear. They, manifesting their glory, quarrelled among themselves and said, " We hold together and support the body ",**
>
> *** ***Prana***, **the greatest of them said, "Be not in delusion; I alone, dividing myself fivefold, support this body and keep it going ".**

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* अथ हैनं भार्गवो वैदर्भिः पप्रच्छ ।
भगवन्कत्येव देवाः प्रजां विधारयन्ते
कतर एतत्प्रकाशयन्ते कः पुनरेषां वरिष्ठ इति ॥
(Pr. Up., Q. II-1)

** तस्मै स होवाचाऽऽकाशो ह वा एष देवो
वायुरग्निरापः पृथिवी वाङ्मनश्चक्षुः श्रोत्रं च ।
ते प्रकाश्याभिवदन्ति वयमेतद्बाणं अवष्टभ्य विधारयामः ॥
(Pr. Up., Q. II-2)

*** तान्वरिष्ठः प्राण उवाच ।
मा मोहमापद्यथाहमेवैतत्पञ्चधाऽऽत्मानं
प्रविभज्यैतद्बाणमवष्टभ्य विधारयामीति;
तेऽश्रद्दधाना बभूवुः ॥
(Pr. Up , Q II-3)

When the organs of action-and-knowledge quarrelled among themselves and each asserted that each was the most important factor in the body politic, *Prana* quietly came forward (in this *Brahmana*) with a self-confidence born out of his own sense of unquestionable superiority, and advised all the others that he alone is the strength and power which they are manifesting, and he alone is the Vital Factor in the body. *Prana* dividing itself into five distinct channels of activity, feeds them all in their functioning and maintains the individual, actively living through his experiences in life.

Prana is often misunderstood to be breath. In philosophical terminology, *Prana* stands for the manifested Life Energy which expresses itself in the various physiological functions, such as perception (*Prana*), excretion (*Apana*), digestion (*Vyana*), circulation (*Samana*), and the thinking process (*Udana*).

The manifestation of life in the physical body, which also expresses itself as the activities of the five organs of action, is called Vital-air-sheath. The food-sheath which was explained previously, is completely pervaded by this Vital-air-sheath. There is *Prana* in the toe as well as in the brow. If from some portion, the *Prana* is gone, that portion becomes paralysed. Thus, the *Pranamaya-Kosa* is the "soul" or "*Atman*" of the *Annamaya-Kosa*. Owing to the Vital-air-sheath and its dynamism alone all the activities of the body take place, hence the *Pranamaya-kosa* is considered as the "soul" of the *Annamaya-kosa* as pointed out in the *Taittiriya Upanishad*.

> *** Other than that (Soul) made up of the essence of food, there is an inner Sheath made of *Prana*. With it this is filled. This (*Pranamaya*) is of the same form as the previous one. Its human form is exactly the same as the**

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* तस्माद्वा एतस्मादन्नरसमयात्। अन्योऽन्तर आत्मा प्राणमयः। तेनैष पूर्णः। स वा एष पुरुषविध एव। तस्य पुरुषविधताम्। अन्वयं पुरुषविधः। तस्य प्राण एव शिरः। व्यानो दक्षिणः पक्षः। अपान उत्तरः पक्षः। आकाश आत्मा। पृथिवी पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा। तदप्येष श्लोको भवति॥

(Tai. Up., Ch. II., Sec. 2)

human form of the former. Of that, *Prana* is the head, *Vyana* is the side, *Apana* is the left side, *Akasa* is the trunk and *Earth* is the tail or the support. (About this also there is the following verse).

In this portion the preceptor is guiding the attention of the disciple to an aspect interior to the gross physical structure which has been already described fully. Here *Prana* is not AIR; this generally is the mistaken notion entertained by all hasty readers, who thereby come to misunderstand the entire *Sastra*. *Prana* only means that vitality which expresses itself in a body when it is alive. This vitality of Life expressing itself at various centres in the physical structure and promoting different functions, is together indicated by the term *Prana* in the *Vedas*.

The Vital-Air-Sheath is described here as the one interior *to the Food-Sheath, forming as it were a silken lining to the outer* sheath. Molten metal poured into a mould necessarily takes the shape of the mould; so too, the *Pranamaya* fully occupies the Food-Sheath. The vital activity of life is not centred at one special point, nor is it scattered at different points of the Physical Sheath. It, being the very nature of life, expresses its nature through every conceivable point in the body

The total of life's vitality as expressed through the physical *body has been very carefully noted for the purpose of scientific* classification. Though life be one, it expresses itself in different departments of activities, and therefore, *Prana* is considered by the ancient teachers under five main classifications To understand them as five distinct *Pranas* will amount to misunderstanding our scriptures; the *Prana* remaining the same, five different names have been given to it, to indicate the various departments of its activities.

Just as the same individual is the father at home, an officer in the office, a friend in the club, a mere devotee in the pilgrim-centre, so too, the same *Prana* is known by five different names. To indicate its five different activities: (i) life's vitality functioning in the organs of perception is called *Prana*, (ii) expression of life as vitality that presides over the actions that throw out or

reject the by-products from the physical body is called *Apana;* (iii) the strength in us. administering the department of digestion is called *Vyana;* (iv) the energy behind the distribution of assimilated food to the various corners of the body politic is called *Samana;* (v) the energy which helps the ego-centre to leave the physical structure at the time of death to pursue its transmigratory pilgrimage, is called *Udana.*

These five *Pranas* together constitute the life's vitality as exhibited in a living creature. This idea is fully explained in the *Vedic Mantra* which is given below.

> * **Through *Prana* the Gods (*Indriyas*) live and so also do man and the animals in the animal kingdom. *Prana* is verily the life of beings. Therefore it is called the Universal Life or the Life of all. Those who worship *Prana* as *Brahman* come to live the full span of their life; *Prana* verily is the life of beings. Therefore it is called the Universal Life or the Life of All.**

Because vitality in each individual is a sign of that subject's life; the Total *Prana* is called the Total Life. Thus describes the *Vedic Mantra*, the relation between the *Prana* in us and the Infinite Reality. Therefore the *Veda* says that he who realizes this sacredness of the vitality in him, comes to economise in his physical expenditures. Thus by avoiding all foolish dissipations, he comes to live the full span of his life.

Prana conceived as the Nucleus of all Energy (Power and dynamism), both within the body and without in the Universe, is explained in detail in the *Prasnopanishad.* A detailed study with understanding and critical enquiry of the following stanzas will give us an intuitive perception of what the *Sruthi* means by the term *"Prana".*

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* प्राणं देवा अनु प्राणन्ति। मनुष्याः पशवश्चये। प्राणो हि भूतानामायुः। तस्मात्सर्वायुषमुच्यते। सर्वमेव त आयुर्यन्ति। ये प्राणं ब्रह्मोपासते। प्राणो हि भूतानामायुः। तस्मात्सर्वायुषमुच्यत इति॥

(Tai. Up., Ch. II, Sec. 3)

*They (the sense-organs) did not believe: the principal *Prana* got irritated, and seemed as it were, to go out from the body. When the *Prana* got up to depart, all the others immediately had to get up too, and when it remained in its place, all the others remained too, just as when the Queen-bee leaves, all the other bees also leave the hive and when she returns, they return too; the mind, speech, eye, ear and the rest being pleased praised the *Prana*.

This story of the revolt of the sense-organs against the *Prana's* authority, and the Supreme *Prana's* successful strategy in crushing this revolution, is an example given by the Master only to bless his disciples. If he had declared directly that of all of them *Prana* is the most important, an uninitiated student would not have accepted it because, generally, he is not aware of the connection between the *Prana* and the *Indriyas*. In his hasty understanding of his own structure he feels that the *Indriyas* are independent. The story slowly and steadily provides all the arguments necessary and then indicates that the *Prana* is the Supreme Factor in the body.

Even when the *Prana* got up as though going, all the other *Indriyas* in the body fainted, and when the *Prana* took back the reins of office, all the other *Indriyas* started functioning as before. Thus, when they subjectively experienced the importance of the *Prana*, they surrendered themselves to glorify the *Prana* that he is greater than all of them individually and collectively. This is beautifully illustrated by the analogy of the entire population of the bee-hive following the Queen-bee when according to her fancy she leaves the hive, and when she returns, the bees

* सोऽभिमानादूर्ध्वमुत्क्रामत इव
तस्मिन्नुत्क्रामत्यथेतरे सर्व एवोत्क्रामन्ते
तस्मिंश्च प्रतिष्ठमाने सर्व एव प्रतिष्ठन्ते।
तद्यथा मक्षिका मधुकरराजानमुत्क्रामन्तं
सर्वा एवोत्क्रामन्ते तस्मिंश्च प्रतिष्ठमाने
सर्वा एव प्रतिष्ठन्त एवं वाङ्मनश्चक्षुः
श्रोत्रं च; ते प्रीताः प्राणं स्तुवन्ति ॥

(Pr. Up., Q II-4)

also return.

The glorification of *Prana* continues in the following stanzas also, unveiling his glory a little more to allow us to discover a little more of the loveliness and the irresistible charm in nature's vitality. In verse (9) the same *Upanishad* gives one more idea that the Total Energy is himself none other than the non-dual Factor behind the Hindu Trinity. He himself is *Indra* the Creator, *Rudra* the Destroyer and *Vishnu* the Protector.

> *** Oh *Prana*, the Lord *Indra* of all Energy, thou art *Rudr*a in prowess and also the Protector; as thou movest in the sky, thou art the Sun, the Lord of all Life.**

Indra is the presiding deity of the mind and as such, he is certainly the creator, because all creative energies become active in us only when our mind functions. Viewed thus, certainly, everything *in the Universe is established in Energy* and controlled and directed by Energy. This portion of the *Rishi's* words sounds like the most modern declarations of the nuclear-scientists of our day, who declare that matter is established, controlled and sustained by Energy. The only difference perhaps between the old and the new is in that, the old *Rishis,* with an admirable intellectual composure, had applied the discovery and pursued its possibilities not for annihilating one another as the modern scientists, but in blessing the entire generation of mankind. Out of their knowledge they worked out the theory of Man's ascent to Godhood.

The horse-power in an engine can be invoked and can be made either to convey us to our destination or to dash us into pieces against the wayside electric-post. The Energy that takes us to our destination and that which might shatter our car into smithereens during an accident, are both one and the same. In the hands of an expert it can be directed to bless us; in the hands of a drunken fool the same Energy might become a curse. Hence

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* इन्द्रस्त्वं प्राण तेजसा रुद्रोऽसि परिरक्षिता।
त्वमन्तरिक्षे चरसि सूर्यस्त्वं ज्योतिषां पतिः।

(Pr. Up., Q. II-9)

in this *Upanishad*, the following prayer is to the mighty Energy in us, *Prana*, to guide us and take us straight to our destination without any wayside accidents.

> ***All this is within the control of the *Prana*; all that is there in the Heaven, is also under its control. Protect us like a mother. Give us prosperity and health.**

With this *Brahmana* we conclude the glorification of *Prana*, considered as the Lord of the Total Energy in the Universe. Never mistake *Prana* for the mere atmospheric air or mere breath. *Pranayama* is in fact fulfilled only when we come to control the nucleus of all Energy in ourselves. For this purpose we may start our practice through the grossest of the *Pranic* representation, the inspiration and expiration. But ultimately, *Pranayama* fulfils only when the entire energy contents in one's form have been brought perfectly under one's own control, to direct them in whatever fashion one deems fit.

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MANOMAYA KOSA (MENTAL SHEATH)

None of us is entirely unaware of the existence of the mind in us. The mind is the seat in us which entertains our doubts, joys and the like emotions, and which constantly errupts into the non-stop flow of the thought-lava.

But, what is the stuff of the mind? No doubt it is difficult to understand what the mind is, but with our intellectual perception, the mind is capable of being explained to some extent by means of drawing parallels. The mind has been explained in our *Sastras* in various ways. According to one definition, the mind is nothing but a bundle of "*Vasanas*" (impressions). To the modern psychologist the mind is nothing but a "temperament". Another explanation given in the Hindu *Sastras* to make us understand the mind is by comparing it to the River Ganges.

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* प्राणस्येदं वशे सर्वं त्रिदिवे यत्प्रतिष्ठितम् ।
मातेव पुत्रान्रक्षस्व श्रीश्च प्रज्ञां च विधेहि न इति ॥

(Pr. Up., Q. II–13)

Now what is a river ? The river is not a mere mass of water between two banks. A river is essentially an *incessent flow of water* from its source to its end. Similarly, the mind is the *unceasing flow of our thoughts*. Thoughts are the manifestations of the mind. When thoughts are "flowing" at a great speed, one following the other unceasingly, the *flow of thought* is called the "mind". If we can stop the *flow*, there is no more functioning of the mind. How this thought flow is maintained is explained here.

> * **The five sense-organs act as priests who feed the fuel of numerous desires into the mental-sheath, which is the sacrificial fire. This fire (mental-sheath) brings about and maintains the entire phenomenal world when it is set ablaze by the sense-objects which act as a continuous stream of oblations.**

Here, *Acharya* Shankara gives us a metaphor from the *Vedic* rituals. In the *Vedic* period, when *Yagnas* and *Yagas* were performed, fire was usually invoked first. So a trough was made which was called the fire-altar (*Agni kunda*). Into it fuel was put and then the fire was kindled. As the fire blazed up, the priests and house-holders poured their offerings of ghee etc., into it chanting the appropriate *mantras*. When into the fire the offerings (*aajya*) were poured, the flames blazed higher. This picture of the *Yagna* was very familiar to all students of ritualism, and hence Shankara uses it here to explain the *Manomaya-Kosa*.

The sense-objects are the offerings (*aajya*) in the subjective Fire-altar within. The sense-organ eyes bring forms and colours; the ears bring sounds; the tongue brings tastes; the nose brings smells and the skin brings the sensations of touch. Thus the sense-stimuli are brought by the sense-organs as their oblations into the body which is the trough (*kunda*) serving as the Fire-altar.

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* पञ्चेन्द्रियैः पञ्चभिरेव होतृभिः
प्रचीयमानो विषयाज्यधारया ।
जाज्वल्यमानो बहुवासनेन्धनै-
र्मनोमयाग्निर्वहति प्रपञ्चम् ॥

(VC–168)

In the sacred trough fire is already burning and into this the offerings are poured. The fuel for the fire is the *Vasanas* which are already burning in the flames of thought-agitations. When the offerings are poured into the already burning fire, it blazes forth to become the very root of life.

The *Manomaya-Kosa* is kept ablaze because of the fuel of *Vasanas.* Into the fire the ghee (the sense-stimuli) is poured by the five great priests, the sense-organs. When they pour the offerings, the fire blazes forth. Thoughts are only imaginations of the mind, expressed in the form of agitations because of its own burning *Vasanas.* When the sense-organs bring in the stimuli, the mind appears to be more ablaze, *i.e.*, the agitations increase more and more. Thus it can be seen that the sense organs bringing in the sense stimuli constantly nourish and keep the mind ever active and agitated.

The mind along with the sense-centres constitutes the mental-sheath.

> *** The organs of perception along with the mind form the mental-sheath which is the sole cause for the "I" and "mine" diversity of things. It has the essential faculty of creating differences of names etc., and it is powerful. It pervades the sheath preceding it—the Vital-air-sheath.**

The sense-organs are in the body, but when the mind is engrossed elsewhere, we do not perceive the things though they are within the range of our senses This is because the *sense-centres* are in the mind, and if the mind is not available, no perception is possible. The sense-organs by themselves cannot perceive. When the mind flows through the sense-organs and reaches, say, the place where the pot is, the experience of "this is a pot" is

* ज्ञानेन्द्रियाणि च मनश्च मनोमयः स्यात्
कोशो ममाहमिति वस्तुविकल्पहेतुः ।
संज्ञादिभेदकलनाकलितो बलीयां-
स्तत्पूर्वकोशमभिपूर्य विजृम्भते यः ॥

(VC-167)

generated. The theory of perception in *Vedanta* is, that the Consciousness riding over the mind as *Chitta*, flows out through the sense-organs to reach the pot-place (*Ghata desa*), and contacts the existence (*Sat*) of the pot. Thus I become conscious of the pot—the Consciousness of the pot is the "knowledge of the pot".

Not only does the mind perceive the external objects, but it also has the ability to project the sense of "my-ness" on those objects perceived. This "my-ness" is nothing but the "I-ness" reflected upon certain objects outside. So the extension of "I-ness" is "my-ness". This extension spreads to frontiers which can never be well defined. "I-nesss" and "my-ness" are born in and maintained by this *Manomaya-Kosa*, consisting of the sense-centres and the mind. The mental sheath creates two distinctions, "me" and "mine". Through them the mind annihilates the peace whthin. It destroys the inner peace by the sense of "me" (*Aham*) and the outer peace by the sense of "mine" (*Mama*).

According to *Vedanta*, not only the "me" and "mine" are the creation of the mind, but the "world around me" is also nothing but the creation of the mind. Thus *Acharya* Shankara says in the *Vivekachoodamani:*

> * **The mind continuously delivers for the experiencer, (1) all sense-objects, gross or subtle, without exception, (2) distinctions based upon body, caste, order-of-life and creed, as well as (3) the difference of qualities, actions, motives and results.**

All the sense-objects without any exception are bred by the mind. The objects of the world, in fact, exist and play about only in the observer's mind, and yet, due to *Maya* it is seen as though they exist outside, as the reflection of oneself in a mirror.

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* मनःप्रसूते विषयानशेषान्
स्थूलात्मना सूक्ष्मतया च भोक्तुः।
शरीरवर्णाश्रमजातिभेदान्
गुणक्रियाहेतुफलानि नित्यम्॥

(VC–177)

Not only are the objects created by the mind, but the subject, the enjoyer-of-objects, is also created by the mind alone. In the dream-state, the dreamer, the dream-world and the dream experience are all created by the same mind of the waker. The dreamer while dreaming, cannot appreciate and understand that the things around him, and he himself playing as the dreamer, are all created by his own mind. The waking state perception is really in no way different from the illusory dream state.

The gross objects outside are constituted of forms and colours, sounds and tastes, smells and touch. The subtle objects consist of feelings and thoughts. The stimuli of the world outside (forms, sounds, etc.,) when contacted by the intelligence, riding on the mind, mould the mind into the exact shapes of the objects. These forms, moulded in the mind are considered as thought-waves and are illumined by the light of Consciousness.

Thus every object is a wave of thought illumined by the awareness, when the light of consciousness illumines the thought-waves, and then they become our experience of the object. Thus the perceived world has an existence only as a modification of the mind-stuff and is experienced at all times as an inner emotion.

How is it that we are constantly experiencing the world-of-objects as definitely outside ourselves, will now be the doubt in our mind. In order to make this clear, the dream analogy is made use of by the *Vedantins*.

Even though all of us know that the dream happenings in the dream-world, peopled by the dream-crowd are all only experiences within, yet, *in the dream, while the dream lasts*, the dream world is definitely outside the dreamer himself. It is only on awakening that he realizes that the entire dream and its happenings are but figments of his own imagination, having an existence only within himself, and that his mind was the very substratum upon which the dream was playing.

In the same way the world of plurality, though it exists only within one's own mind, is experienced as solid and substantial and outside the experiencer. So the *Advaitin* says that the "I"

and the "world around me" are the creations of the mind alone. The pluralistic world-of-objects recognized is only the play of the mind — the *Maya*.

VIGNANAMAYA KOSA (INTELLECTUAL SHEATH)

After indicating the Mental Sheath in the human personality, the *Rishi*, the author of the *Taittiriya Upanishad* guides the disciple to a still more subtle and therefore interior sheath of matter identifying with which the individual comes to claim his intellectual personality. This Intellectual Sheath, as before, pervades the entire area of the *Manomaya* and, therefore, it also has to be conceived as having a human form.

This Intellectual Sheath having the form of a human is described as having faith for its head.

> *** Different from that which is made of mind is another inner soul made up of intelligence, and by that this is filled. It also has the shape of a human. According to the human shape of the previous one, is the human shape of this one also. Faith is its head, *Ritam* is its right side, *Satyam* is the left side, *Yoga* is the trunk and *Maha* is the tail, the support.**

In this anatomy of the intellectual-man in us, as described in the *Upanishads* with faith as head, *Ritam* and *Satyam* as sides, *Yoga* as the trunk and *Maha* as the lower limbs, the attempt of the *Rishis* is to bring out at one stroke, through a clear-cut caricature, the essential scientific details about the intellect (that were available then), to the memory of those vigilant students of that time.

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* तस्माद्वा एतस्मान्मनोमयात्। अन्योऽन्तर आत्मा
विज्ञानमयः। तेनैष पूर्णः। स वा एष पुरुषविध एव।
तस्य पुरुषविधताम्। अन्वयं पुरुषविधः। तस्य
श्रद्धैव शिरः। ऋतं दक्षिणः पक्षः। सत्यमुत्तरः
पक्षः। योग आत्मा। महः पुच्छं प्रतिष्ठा। तदप्येष
श्लोको भवति॥

(Tai. Up., Ch. II, Sec.-4)

In *Vedanta* " Faith " is essentially the inward courage in us to live consistently, attuning ourselves to the ideal that we have ourselves intellectually grasped. In short, we may understand faith as something like self-confidence in ourselves. It is very well known that even in our ordinary life our success depends not only upon chance or upon our qualifications but mainly upon the confidence in ourselves. Without some amount of self-confidence we cannot live even an average life successfully. One who has completely lost confidence in himself, is a lunatic who is a danger to society and a sad encumbrance upon himself. The Intellect can grow and assert itself only if there be an unbroken flow of self-confidence in it. The *Upanishad* rightly expresses that the very head, meaning the sacred and most important limb, of the intellectual man in us, is self-confidence termed here as *Sraddha.*

Similarly, its right and left sides are the intellectually appreciated and digested essence of the great text-books (*Ritam*) and the courage of conviction that propels one to live upto the *Ritam*, is called *Satyam*. It is abundantly clear that a man can grow in his intellect only through study and training in every walk of life.

The trunk or the essence, in the sense that it is the main seat of vitality which distributes its essence and nourishes all the parts of this intellectual man, is explained here as *Yoga*. The word *Yoga* should not bring before our mind the picture of twisted human forms or bellowing *pranayama*-practitioners The word *Yoga* comes from *Yuj* to join; and any attempt of any individual to live his life through contemplation, attuning his own imperfect being of today to the greater and nobler concept of the Truth in him, is called *Yoga*.

Methods by which we can live upto a nobler and diviner goal, and thereby come to drop our weaknesses and imperfections from which we are today suffering and all such sacred activities divine in concept and noble in spirit, are called *Yoga*. Success in *Yoga* mainly depends upon an individual's competency in concentration and efficiency in deeper meditation. Therefore, to say that the very " trunk " of the intellect is the power of

concentration, is only expressing a fact which even modern scientists must accept without any complaints.

This individual intellect is rooted in *Mahat-Tattwa* says the *Upanishad. Mahat-Tattwa* is the concept of the Total-Mind or Total-Intellect. The individual intellect is conditioned by the Total-intellect at every moment, although we are rarely conscious of it. Suppose for example a young man is sitting in the verandah of his house, rather restless because of his incapacity to see as many motion pictures as he wishes, or because he has not yet come to possess a radio. Compared with his grandfather's generation, we can say that this man has started worrying for a thing over which his grandfathers never thought of complaining. The young man is now thinking in terms of his age, and to that extent we may say that he is the product of the thoughts of his times.

This idea is elaborated to include even its subtlest implications, in the story of the Ten Great Incarnations accepted by the mythology in Hinduism. According to the age and the conditions, the *Avatar* also had changed in its physical structure, mental capacity, and intellectual accomplishments. From the Fish to Krishna is the entire story revealed of how the great Man-Gods of each era had to prove themselves a faithful replica of the total intellectual throbbing of their respective ages.

A Mahatma Gandhi in Italy would have been as complete a failure as a Mussolini would have been in India. Not only are the great leaders and the prophets thus the products of their ages, but everyone of us is guided entirely by the influence of the age. In fact, we could say that there is but a very meagre fraction in us which is original. This idea is expressed here by saying that the individual intellect is rooted in the total intellectual influence of the era.

In the *Vedantic* literature very often we find that the mind and intellect are considered to be one and the same. Intellect is mind which has come to a decision or a willed judgement. The intellect is considered subtler than the mind because it ventures forth into realms farther than what it had comprehended before.

The hitherto inexperienced ones are the fields of its pleasures; hence, we consider the intellect to be an interior sheath to that of the mind.

The *Vignanamaya Kosa* (intellectual-sheath) constitutes the intellect, the sense-organs of perception and all the different modifications of the intellect. It controls the organs of perception.

> * **The intellect with its modifications along with the organs of perception form the intellectual-sheath (*Vignanamaya Kosa*). It has the characteristics of "the agent" (or doer), which is the cause for transmigration.**

This intellectual-sheath in man veils the Infinite Reality. It is the cause for *Samsar*. The modifications of the intellect are the awareness of "doing" and the concept of "I am the doer" This concept creates more and more *Vasanas* In order to exhaust the *Vasanas* the individual has to move from one field of enjoyment to another. So there are births and deaths, again and again. How this *Vignanamaya Kosa* functions in human beings is explained in the following verse:

> ** **Accompanied by the reflection of the light of *Chit*, the intellectual-sheath is a modification of *Prakriti*. It is endowed with the function of knowledge and is always completely identified with the body, sense-organs etc.**

The *Vignanamaya Kosa* is constantly accompanied by the reflection of the light of *Chit*, Consciousness. Our doubts and

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* बुद्धिर्बुद्धीन्द्रियैः सार्धं सवृत्ति कर्तृलक्षणः।
विज्ञानमयकोशः स्यात्पुंसः संसारकारणम्॥

(VC–184)

** अनुव्रजच्चित्प्रतिबिम्बशक्ति–
विज्ञानसंज्ञः प्रकृतेर्विकारः।
ज्ञानक्रियावानहमित्यजस्रं
देहेन्द्रियादिष्वभिमन्यते भृशम्॥

(VC–185)

celestial being or angel *etc.*, would be to confuse ourselves with ridiculous misunderstandings. The word *Deva* comes from the root which means illumination; *Deva* means illuminator. The *Devas* in us are the five sense-organs and the mind; they consider intellect as the true factor behind them. Without an active intelligence the *Indriyas* are incapable of receiving their impulses and acting readily to meet the challenges in the outer world.

He who lives in the Consciousness that every perception of the sense-organs is an expression of a deliberate grace of the intellect, comes to develop his intellect more and more. Naturally such a person cannot make any new mistakes and he comes to live much more happily, fulfilling all his ambitions and desires. A fully aware existence, at once intelligent and conscious, is sure to lead us from success to success. To such a vigilant individual there cannot be any sense of frustration.

The sorrows of life are all due to our misunderstanding ourselves to be nothing but the fleshy body. This body-consciousness circumscribes our ability and burns with terrific responsibilities and false sense of duties. These are the sins of the body mentioned here. One who lives in the intellectual zone as a masterly intelligent being, will thereby be getting himself redeemed from his bodily pre-occupations, and to that extent he will be feeling free and liberated.

ANANDAMAYA KOSA (BLISS SHEATH)

As before, we are told here that deeper within the Intellectual Sheath, filling it up entirely and fully, is the subtlest of the matter envelopment called the Bliss Sheath.

This Bliss-sheath is constituted of all the flickering joys that we experience in our contacts with the finite world of matter when the sense-organs come to live them. All those joys put together form the subtlest of the Sheaths. In life our existence is conditioned by our joys also. Just as the body and its condition limit our personality, just as the mind and the intellect and their health

condition our ego-centric existence, so too, our share of joys also adds its colour to our individual existence.

> * Of that of the Former (the *Vignanamaya*), this one verily is the soul. Different from this self, made up of intellect (*Vignanamaya*), is another self within, formed of Bliss (*Anandamaya*). By this that is filled (by *Anandamaya* the *Vignanamaya* is full). It has also the shape of man. According to the human form of that, is the human form of this. Of it joy (*Priya*) is the head, rejoicing (*Moda*) is the left side, and happiness (*Pramoda*) is the right side, Bliss (*Ananda*) is the trunk. *Brahman* is the tail, the support. (About this there is also the following verse).

The joys that we experience in life arise from an endless variety of sources, and it would have been the despair of any person in the world to tabulate them all. But the *Rishis* of old could do so. Not only did they bring into their classification all the joys experienced by an individual, but they classified under those heading all the possibilities for enjoyment of all living creatures in the Universe.

This they could achieve by classifying all circumstances under three stages, in the relationship between the conducive sense-objects and their enjoyer. There is a kind of happiness when an individual is mentally brooding over a sense-object, which to him is a source of happiness. Thus when the object of love is absent, the lover enjoys it through contemplation. The joy thus experienced in the contemplation of the loving object is termed in Sanskrit as *Priya*, which we are compelled to translate as "joy".

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* तस्यैष एव शरीर आत्मा। यः पूर्वस्य। तस्माद्वा
एतस्माद्विज्ञानमयात्। अन्योऽन्तर आत्मानन्दमयः।
तेनैष पूर्णः। स वा एष पुरुषविध एव। तस्य पुरुषविधताम्।
अन्वयं पुरुषविधः। तस्य प्रियमेव शिरः। मोदो दक्षिणः
पक्षः। प्रमोद उत्तरः पक्षः। आनन्द आत्मा। ब्रह्म पुच्छं
प्रतिष्ठा। तदप्येष श्लोको भवति॥

(Tai. Up., Ch. II, Sec.-5)

When the object of love is very near the lover, the enjoyment at the vicinity of the enjoyable is certainly better than the delight gained in the mere contemplation of it. This joy which is subtler than *Priya* is termed as *Moda* which we have translated as "*rejoicing*".

When the beloved object is not only near the lover, but he actually comes to indulge in the enjoyment of the object, the joy arising out of this actual experience is termed as *Pramoda*. We translate it as "happiness".

As an example, a lover when he is contemplating upon the beauty of the form, the nobility of the heart and the delicacy of the sentiment of his beloved, his joys are termed as *Priya;* when he is meeting her in a secret arbour of love in the actual vicinity of the true throbbing heart, the joy that arises is called *Moda.* When the same loving couple come to live in mutual embrace, living the soft joys of the betrothal, the pleasure derived from that enjoyment is termed as *Pramoda.* Under these classifications all enjoyment of sense-objects can be arranged. These three are the sources of all our joys.

In describing the *Anandamaya,* the *Rishi* therefore explains that *Priya* is its head and *Moda* and *Pramoda* are the two sides. In all these three sources of joy, the common vital content is but the sense of satisfying delight, and this fact is indicated when the *Rishi* declares that the trunk is *Ananda.*

In the above narration of joy and the bliss-personality in man, though we explained it as the joys experienced through the acquisition, possession and enjoyment of the sense-objects, when we view it closely, we find that all bliss springs from the same source, the supreme Self. Bliss, is the essential nature of the Self, but when choked by the powerful desire agitations, of the mind it is not available for our experience. Possession of the beloved object in its varying degrees of satisfaction, calms the mind; and to the degree the mind is calmed, to that degree beams the Self's Blissful light bursts upon the individual's cognition. This idea is further made clear by *Acharya* Shankara in the *Vivekachoodamani* thus:

> * The *Anandamaya Kosa* (bliss-sheath) is the modification of Nescience, which is kissed by a reflection of the *Atman*, which is Bliss Absolute. Pleasure, joy etc., are its attributes and it springs into expression when an object agreeable to it presents itself. The fortunate ones feel it spontaneously when the fruits of their good actions manifest. Every being without the least effort derives great joy from it.

Anandamaya Kosa is also a *Vrithi*, a mental disturbance. "*Vrithi*" means "thought". Even during deep-sleep there are thought-waves. *Samadhi* is the only state wherein all thought-waves actually stop. Deep-sleep is not *samadhi*. During deep-sleep there are yet subtle *Vrithis* in the intellect. These *vrithis* can be said to be bliss-thoughts (*Ananda vrithis*).

The quantum of happiness experienced in a man's bosom is inversely proportional to the amount of agitations in the mind. Ordinarily we are used to the endless stress and strain in our daily life. That moment in our life when our agitations are comparatively less, is relatively a happy moment. So the happiest moment is when there are negligible agitations in our mind. These small thought-waves are said to be "bliss-thoughts". At these moments, the bliss of Infinitude is tasted a little. *Acharya* Shankara in his poetic exuberance says, "The ripples of thought-waves arising out of *Tamas* in our mind kiss the reflection of the Bliss of Infinitude". This is characteristic of the *Anandamaya Kosa*.

At times in our life we feel happy without any reason. This is due to the noble *Vasanas* accumulated in us due to our past meritorious actions. Merit (*Punya*) and sin (*Papa*) are determined by the condition and the type of *Vasanas* in us. The *Vasanas* that create more and more agitations in the bosom are termed *Papa*, and those creating peace and serenity in the mind are

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सर्वो नन्दति यत्र साधु तनुभृन्मात्रः प्रयत्नं विना ॥

(VC-207)

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7

Life Unveiled

Every human being is constituted of a physical, a mental and an intellectual equipment and the Conscious Principle which lends sentiency to these equipments. Of these the physical body is the grossest aspect of our personality. The mind is the subtler equipment and the intellect the subtlest of the three. The three together constitute matter which by itself is inert and insentient. The Consciousness is the Spirit in us which propels, motivates and causes these equipments to function. Even so the Consciousness sans equipment has no expression or activities of its own. It is the combination of the two viz., Spirit and Matter which causes the manifestation of life and activity.

A similar phenomenon obtaining in the objective world, presents a clear idea of the structure and functioning of the human mechanism. The human equipment is like an electric bulb or a heater or refrigerator. The bulb, the heater and the refrigerator have no capactity by themselves to light, to heat or to refrigerate until the electric current passes through them; similarly Consciousness functioning through the body-mind-intellect equipment manifests itself as life.

The core of the human personality is the Consciousness which is the Life Centre around which all the activities of the body, mind and intellect revolve. It remains ever changeless and immovable like an axle in a wheel, but causes all changes and movements to occur. Religion teaches us the art of focussing our attention on the Spiritual core which is our real nature, and therefore, the field of enquiry of the *Rishis* was the "Experiencer", whereas that of the physical scientists is the "Experienced". Investigation about the "Experiencer" is Philosophy, while investigation about the "Experienced" is Science.

Through systematic subjective enquiry the *Rishis* came to some subtle truths. Man the experiencer is the subject who gains experiences of the world outside through his instruments of experience, namely his body, mind and intellect. All experiences that a man gains in his life time are either through the body or through the mind or through the intellect.

Through his body with its five sense organs, man gains various experiences—form through the eyes, sound through the ears, smell through the nose, taste through the tongue and touch through the skin. The form, the sound, the smell, the taste and the touch are all experienced by man through his body.

The world of objects can be brought under five main headings, Forms, Sounds, Smells, Tastes and Touches. Besides these we know nothing of the world outside. As it were, the observer in us looks on to a world of variegated names and forms through five miniature peep-windows, each limited in scope and giving only a partial view-point of the world.

The same man, the subject, gains experiences of the world of feelings and emotions through his mind; he entertains his ideas and ideals through his intellect. Thus everyone while living, gains experiences of three different worlds through three different equipments; through the body, the world of objects, through the mind, the world of emotions and through the intellect, the world of ideas.

Man the subject, can therefore be neither the body nor th

mind nor the intellect. He seems to be a different factor altogether from all these three instruments of experience, but having no doubt, a very intimate relationship with them. The individual who observes through a telescope, surely is not the object observed, nor is he the telescope with which he observes; the telescope is only an instrument of observation; the observer is differnt from the instrument of observation and the object observed.

The subject identified with the intellect, experiences the world of ideas; he when identified with the mind, experiences the world of feelings; identified with the body, he again comes to experience the world-of-objects. But he, the subject, is himself neither the field-of experiences, nor the instruments-of-experiences. He must 'e totally different from both of them.

As he thus enquires, he is forced to discover the *knower* in im, but for whom his sense-organs cannot contact the outer ense-objects, and without whom he cannot live the experiences. n short he finds out that neither the assembly of limbs and sense organs (the body), nor his mind nor his intellect can, of its own ccord, function without a vitalizing principle behind them all. Although he feels It within him intimately, among his fellow beings, uch a discovery is not common. Hence his confusion.

Thus we find the *Kenopanishad* opening with the very enquiry into the source of the power because of which the student is able to see, hear, live and feel etc.:

> * **Willed and directed by whom does the mind light upon its objects? Commanded by whom does the main Vital Air (*Prana*) proceed to function? What intelligence directs the eyes (towards their respective objects)?**

Had the question been upon how the mind functions, or on the physiological functioning of the sense-organs etc., the student

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From the way he had couched his question "*Willed and directed by whom does the mind light upon its objects?*", it is evident that the sudent is enquiring into a factor which lies beyond the very structure of the mind and its expressions, and which makes it possible for the mind to entertain feelings and to ride on the fleet-footed steed of memory through both time and space, to reach and recognize various objects and beings.

In themselves the sense organs and the mind-intellect equipments are all made up of matter. Matter is insentient. In a living entity these vehicles are experienced as dynamic and vibrant with enthusiasm. What is this sacred Truth, the secret of life, in the mere presence of which matter gathers to itself a joyous radiance of brilliant achievements? How can inert matter itself act? But they are active, and so, what makes them active?

To resolve this confusion, the Great Riddle of life, the disciple approaches his *Guru* enquiring if there is an independent Eternal "director" who, by his mere "wish", prompts the mind to alight on the objects. If there be such a great Illuminator and Controller, who is he? What is it? What is my relationship with the Supreme Power existing ever so secretively within me, ever vigilant, ever brilliant and ever alert?

It is now the function of the Master to point out this realizable Truth, that there is such a Divine Spark in us, which is Eternal Wisdom, the *Atman*. Thus the Master in his reply points out:

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abandoned the sense of I-ness in these and rising above sense-life, the wise become Immortal.

We find that to the direct question of the disciple, the Master's answer is not so direct, but appears to be couched in evasive terms. Obviously it has to be so when viewed from a superficial standpoint. But as we go on digesting his replies, we shall discover that there is no evasiveness on the part of the Master. On the other hand, his solicitude towards the disciple is so great that, in the circumstances, any other answer given by the Master would have certainly caused misunderstanding in the mind of the disciple. By saying that there is an " Intelligence of the intellect " and " an Eye of the eye", "Ear of the ear", etc., it has been indicated beyond doubt that the external organs, the *Indriyas* and the intellect are not capable of functioning by themselves, but are motivated by a power from within.

A little scrutiny will reveal to us how exactly are our instruments limited in their capacities. For example, with our eyes we can see the objects; we know that the eye is an instrument of vision. But the eye itself cannot see. If it could, then I could have plucked my eye and made an offering of it to my blind brother or neighbour. But Modern Science insists that the eye-ball in itself is impotent without the nerve centre of vision in the brain.

In fact, our eyes are only the instrument of seeing. And very rarely do we understand the full import of this declaration. Let us try to understand it with an example. A telescope is an instrument for viewing distant objects. The instrument in itself does not see anything at all. The observer at the eyepiece viewing through the telescope sees an object in the heavens. Here, the " subject " is observing the " object " through the instrument.

Similarly, the eye is an *instrument* with which the seer looks out to see the objects of form and colour. A telescope-viewer may observe the entire world-of-objects with the instrument, but

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* श्रोत्रस्य श्रोत्रं मनसो मनो यद् वाचो ह वाचं स उ प्राणस्य प्राणः।
चक्षुषश्चक्षुरतिमुच्य धीराः प्रेत्यास्माल्लोकादमृता भवन्ति॥
(Ke. Up., Ch.1–2)

he will never succeed in observing himself (the seer) with the same telescope. Indeed the moment the viewer behind the eyepiece shifts himself to be in front of the object-piece of the telescope, there is no seer observing the objects ! We cannot be the cake and eat it too. Philosophically this truth is declared as "the same entity cannot be the subject and the object at one and the same time". The observer cannot at the same time be the observed. Therefore the teacher says:

> * **The eye does not go there, nor speech, nor mind. We do not know that. We do not know how to instruct one about It. It is distinct from the known and above the unknown. We have heard it; so stated the preceptors who taught us that.**

A knowledge experienced by the five *Indriyas* alone can be expressed in words; one cannot explain to others the Truth which is lived through intution. When the theme for expression belongs to the plane of sense-experience, we can describe it in terms of its qualifications, species, manifestations, etc. Neither the sense-organs nor the organs of action can reach the subject, the *Atman*. Neither the eyes nor any other of our sense-organs can reach our Self. We therefore cannot instruct others about the Self. It is different from what is *known* and it is beyond what is *unknown*. The only way then to explain the Truth is through the *Sastras*.

A wealth of meaning is compressed into the above *Mantra* in its words "that is verily different from the *known* and also from the *unknown*." The *known* (*viditam*) means the entire objective phenomenal world which can be perceived through the sense-organs, mind and intellect. Since we have found already that these are not the agents of Truth but mere inert instruments of Pure Knowledge, they in themselves cannot perceive the *known* without the *perceiver* behind them. The seer or Perceiver cannot be *perceived* through the very instruments of perception. So then, *knower* is not the *known*, but is beyond the *known*.

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* न तत्र चक्षुर् गच्छति न वाग् गच्छति नो मनो न विद्मो न विजानीमो यथैतदनुशिष्यात्। अन्यदेव तद् विदितादथो अविदितादधि। इति शुश्रुम पूर्वेषां ये नस्तद् व्याचचक्षिरे॥

(Ke Up., Ch.1-3)

Again, the *Perceiver* cannot be the *unknown*. When the teacher said that the Self is beyond the *known*, naturally, the student is apt to conclude that the Self must be an *unknown* entity. To remove this possible misunderstanding in the disciple that the self is a factor "*unknown and the unknowable*", and to assert that It is a positive factor beyond the *unknown* also, the *Sruti* emphasises "*aviditadadhi*"—"*above the unknown*".

This term "Above the Unknown" seems to be very tricky and intriguing only to the one who does not sit up and ponder over it. To an intellectual idler alone the term is hollow and mysterious. What then is the meaning of the statement "*Above the Unknown*"? *Acharya* Shankara in his commentary explains the word "*Above*" as "*something other than*"; he argues that when we say "a bird on the railing", the bird is "something other than the railing" indeed!

Let us try to understand this by an example. Do you know the date of birth of Emperor Asoka? "No!", "No!", may be your immediate answer. Now try to understand what exactly happens in you as you say that you do not know. At the question, "what is the date of birth of Emperor Asoka", you started seeking for the information in your memory-store, and finding that it was not there, cried out "No, I don't know". We know that each of us had a *positive knowledge of the negative idea* "I don't know". In short you knew that "you don't know". It is clear that a *Positive Illumining factor* illumined for you this negative idea. That factor is the Self and certainly it is above and so "different from", *the negative Unknown Idea illumined.* The sun illumines things other than itself; it being the nature of light, we are not right when we say, that it illumines itself.

If the Absolute self is beyond the *known* and the *unknown*, what else can it be but the *knower* himself! The *knower* knows the *known* and it equally knows what is the *unknown* also. That *knower* is the Self, the *Atman.*

From the above it is clear that there is an active intelligent seer behind the eye, a hearer behind the ears, a smeller behind the nose, a taster behind the tongue and a feeler behind the skin.

The Conscious Awareness which is the seer-in-the-eyes cannot be different from the Awareness which is the hearer-behind-the-ears. It is one and the same Conscious Principle of awareness that is the experiencer behind all the sense-organs. Same must be the feeler-behind-the-mind and the knower-behind-the-intellect. In short, life is nothing but the ability to react through the instruments of cognition, feeling and understanding. This observer is nothing but the life principle in us acting through these various equipments.

As long as life exists in any living being, it expresses an urge to know. The degree of this urge may vary from individual to individual. But the urge to know, expressed through an equipment, is what we recognise as its life. The capacity of an organism to receive stimuli and send forth responses is the transaction of life; when this "*knower*", the individuality, has departed from the equipment, we consider it as dead. This is the "knower-of-the-Field" (*Kshetragna*) according to Lord Krishna.

*** This body, O *Kaunteya*, is called the Field, and he who knows it is called *Kshetragna* (the knower of-the-Field) by those who know them, i.e., by the sages.**

In this mechanical age it is very easy to understand that there must be a "field" for energy to play on, and that then alone it can manifest as work done, and serve man. Steam energy cannot be transformed into locomotion unless it is made to pass through the steam-engine. Electricity cannot give us breeze unless it passes through the mechanism of a fan. Similarly the equipments (assembly of matter layers) through which life passes when an individuality is expressed, are defined here by Krishna as the "Field".

This field is made up of lifeless matter, the minerals. And yet as long as it lives, it functions, it *knows*. This "principle-of-knowing", functioning in the "field", is the "enjoyer-of-the-field", the "knower".

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* इदं शरीरं कौन्तेय क्षेत्रमित्यभिधीयते ।
एतद्यो वेत्ति तं प्राहुः क्षेत्रज्ञ इति तद्विदः ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIII-2)

Here, Lord Krishna has assured his listeners that the definitions given by him for the terms " body " and the " knower-of-the-body " are not arbitrary declarations or hypothetical suppositions, but are in keeping with the actual experiences of all the great Masters of yore. In short, here we have a definition of matter (*Kshetra*) and the Spirit functioning through it (*Kshetrajna*). The entire world-of-objects constitutes the kingdom of matter; and the vital knower of the world-of-matter, constituted of the equipments and their array of perceptions, feelings and thoughts, is the Spirit. Therefore:

> *** Whenever any being is born, the moving or the unmoving, know you, O best of the *Bharatas* that it is from the union between the " Field " and the " knower-of-the-Field ".**

All things that are born in the world—both the world of inert matter (unmoving) and the world of conscious beings (moving)—arise neither from the " Field " (*Prakriti*) nor from the " knower-of-the-Field " (*Purusha*). The source is from the Marriage of both *Prakriti* and *Purusha*. After indicating the world-of-matter and the Spirit that presides over it, Krishna makes a striking announcement in the following stanza, "I am the knower-of-the-Field in all Fields ".

> **** Know Me as the " Knower-of-the-Field " in all " Fields ", O Bharata; the knowledge of the " Field " as also that of the " Knower-of-the-Field " is considered by Me to be My Knowledge.**

If in all " Fields " the " Knower " is one, the plurality is only in the matter-envelopments, and the Life that presides over them

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* यावत्संजायते किंचित्सत्त्वं स्थावरजंगमम् ।
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञसंयोगात्तद्विद्धि भरतर्षभ ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIII–27)

** क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत ।
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोर्ज्ञानं यत्तज्ज्ञानं मतं मम ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIII–3)

is one everywhere. This Universal One, the Transcendental Truth is indicated by the first person singular "I am", because every seeker has to rediscover in himself "That, I am".

After indicating the One Spirit behind the entire world-of-matter, Krishna declares that according to Him the correct knowledge of what constitutes in each one of us the perishable, changeable, finite, inert matter, and of the nature of the Infinite, Imperishable and Sentient Spirit, is the Supreme Knowledge. To distinguish the subject from the world-of-objects is the salutary knowledge, which can redeem us from the confusions and sorrows from which we suffer today as the individualised egos.

It must be noted here that Lord Krishna is expounding the *Geeta* in a rare moment of Yogic integration. He is identifying himself with the One Self that is everywhere. This is something like electricity declaring: I am the one energy that gives the glow in all the filaments all over the world. No doubt the *light* in the bulb, the *heat* in the furnace, the movement in the fan are all indeed different manifestations, because the bulb, the furnace, and the fan are dissimilar equipments, but the energy called electricity, is one and the same. Similarly, Krishna says that He the Supreme Self, alone is the light which emerges from the Sun, the moon and the fire.

> * **That light which is residing in the Sun which illumines the whole world, and that which is in the moon and in the fire, know that, that light is Mine.**

The light that comes from the Sun and the moon, the light that emanates from the fire, are all expressions of the same Knowing-Principle, which expresses through the Sun, the moon and the fire. The Sun, the moon and the fire are the cosmic sources of all energy in the world, and the very Source-of-the-energy from where it flows through these phenomenal expressions, is the Knowing-Principle in us. The same Life-Principle functions through

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* यदादित्यगतं तेजो जगद्भासयतेऽखिलम् ।
यच्चन्द्रमसि यच्चाग्नौ तत्तेजो विद्धि मामकम् ॥

(Ge. Ch. XV-12)

the earth and gives the fields their special capacity to sustain and nourish the vegetable world, and when the flora grows up, it is again the same Life-Principle, functioning through the moon and manifesting as the moon light that fills each plant and fruit with its essential food-value.

> *** Permeating the earth I support all beings by (My) energy; and having become the moon, I nourish all herbs.**

Long before artificial manure was discovered, the earth had no doubt a long history; and some of those eras in the bygone days had perhaps more biological mass than at present. And yet, the earth continued to sustain all life. This capacity of the earth to sustain life and nourish it, says the Lord, is "*My own vitality*", meaning, the same Vital-Principle which through the Sun becomes the necessary warmth, while expressing through the earth, becomes the "potential fertility" of the soil and the "life-giving" capacity of the earth.

The same Vital-Principle expresses itself as the warmth-of-life in all living creatures. That physical structure from which all warmth goes, becomes dead. Metabolism creates the body-heat, and the functions of the inner organs continue automatically without any conscious effort on the part of the individual, so long as Life is pulsating in the body.

> **** Having become (the Fire) *Vaisvanara*, I abide in the body of beings, and associated with *Prana* and *Apana*. I digest the four-fold food.**

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* गामाविश्य च भूतानि धारयम्यहमोजसा ।
पुष्णामि चौषधीः सर्वाः सोमो भूत्वा रसात्मकः ॥

(Ge. Ch. XV–13)

** अहं वैश्वानरो भूत्वा प्राणिनां देहमाश्रितः ।
प्राणापानसमायुक्तः पचाम्यन्नं चतुर्विधम् ॥

(Ge. Ch. XV–14)

Here the Eternal Knowing-Principle is indicated as the mighty Life, which when pulsating through the body manifests Itself as the "digestive fire" (*Vaisvanara*), which assimilates all the food taken in. The entire variety of human diet is classified under four heads in Sanskrit as food that can be (i) masticated, (ii) swallowed, (iii) sucked, (iv) licked. Under these four types, we can include all kinds of food, vegetarian and non-vegetarian, prepared and unprepared, raw and cooked. All food consumed through the mouth are digested, assimilated and absorbed because of the digestive system, and the power in the digestive system is nothing but a manifestation of the All-present Life-Principle.

Not only does the "Digestive fire" assimilate the food that reaches the stomach, but it is again life manifested as the peristaltic movement, *Prana,* that receives and rolls down the food swallowed. After digesting, assimilating and absorbing food, it is again the same Divine Spark-of-Life as *Apana* that gives the intestines its capacity to throw out the unabsorbed and unnecessary by-products. In short, it is the Lord that helps us to swallow the food; it is the Lord that assimilates the food; and it is the Lord again that presides over the function of eliminating the by-products.

This Spark-of-Spirit makes the entire body vibrate with life, renders existence possible for a living creature, and maintains by its mere presence the sense-faculties and the mental capacities around itself. No doubt, these are functions that belong to matter; but at the same time these powers of seeing, hearing etc., and also of feeling, thinking etc., are not the powers of the sense-organs, or even of the inner organs (*Anthakarana*). They are the expressions of the Spirit when it functions through matter, and so Lord Krishna says here that along with the mind and five senses "abiding in the *Prakriti*", He functions as the ego or the individuality in the living beings.

> * An eternal portion of myself, having become a living soul in the world of life, and abiding in *Prakriti*, draws (to itself) the (five) senses, with the mind for the sixth.

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* ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूतः सनातनः ।
मनःषष्ठानीन्द्रियाणि प्रकृतिस्थानि कर्षति ॥ (Ge. Ch. XV-7)

* Presiding over the ear, the eye, the skin, the tongue and the nose, as also the mind, He enjoys the sense-objects.

It is this individualised Life-Principle, the *Jeeva,* that enjoys the world-of-objects available, through the mind and the sense organs of hearing, seeing, touching, tasting and smelling. That is why sometimes when we are thinking intensively on some problem, even if our friends come in front of us, we neither see nor hear them. The image of the friend has already fallen on the retina of the eye, and the sound of the speaker has made the necessary vibrations on the tympanum of the ear, and yet, we see or hear nothing, because the conscious mind is turned elsewhere. Therefore, using the mind along with each sense separatively, the individualised ego *(Jeeva)* the dweller-in-the-body enjoys the objects of the sense such as sound, from, touch etc.

Joy and sorrow are the reactions in our mind-intellect produced by the stimuli brought in through the senses. The Awareness in us illumines these and produces the corresponding experiences in us. It would be impossible to be conscious of the flow of experiences without the Grace of the Spirit. Therefore the Spirit becomes the cause for the experiences in life and suffers the joys and sorrows of *samsara.*

Even though the spirit is the cause for all existence and experience everywhere the Spirit (*Purusha*) as itself has no *Samsara.* But the " Knower-of-the-Field ", *Purusha,* when It identifies itself with the " Field " (*Prakriti*), It becomes the experiencer. He identifies with the body and the senses which are the effects of *Prakriti,* and this identification of the *Purusha* (Spirit) with the " Field " is the cause for its participation in the tragic destinies of matter. If there were no contact, indeed, the *Purusha* would have been a mere observer of the world-of-matter without undergoing any suffering or sorrow. But the Spirit plays the part of the miserable mortal because of Its delusory imagination

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* श्रोत्रं चक्षुः स्पर्शनं च रसनं घ्राणमेव च ॥
अधिष्ठाय मनश्चायं विषयानुपसेवते ॥

(Ge. Ch. XV-9)

that it is directly conditioned by the mental and intellectual reactions.

This *(Jeeva)* "Knower-of-the-Field" is the status of the Knowing-Principle when it is functioning in the "Field-of-the-known". Bereft of the identification with the fields-of-objects, the "knower" himself becomes nothing but "Pure Knowledge", without the functions of knowing attached to it.

A driver is one who is driving; a rider is one who is riding, say a horse; a swimmer is one who is swimming at the moment. Off the steering-wheel, off the saddle, away from the waters, the driver, the rider and the swimmer are but three individuals. While functioning in a given field, the subject gathers to itself a certain special status depending on the nature of the field and the type of functions performed therein.

Similarly, even though at Its touch It thrills [illegible] equipments into various activities, the fact that the Spirit is actionless, is the emphasis of the scriptures. When the Supreme Spirit, the Self, sheds its illumination and expresses Itself as the Life of the perishable individual, it looks as though the Self Itself is acting. The actions and movements are of the sense-organs (*Indriyas*) and are not of the Self, the Life Spark [illegible] the sole nourisher of all life. It gives the organs [illegible] for such manifestations.

The steam in the steam engine supplies the power for the locomotive to pull the train of carriages. It has [illegible] for nor any prejudice against anybody travelling in the [illegible] compartments. The steam has no particular [illegible] to reach. Similarly, the Supreme *Atman*, when It [illegible] through the body, mind and intellect, the Self [illegible] actually the Self participates in none of the [illegible] sheaths; It has nothing to gain through any [illegible] person who lacks in his powers of discrimination [illegible] the actionless *Atman*, playing so evidently [illegible] manifested life, but mistakes the activity of the [illegible] as that of the Self, like:

> * The moon appears to be running, when the clouds move in the sky; likewise to the non-discriminating person the *Atman* appears to be active when it is observed through the functions of the sense-organs.

The illustration employed here has a very deep significance to those who can clearly meditate upon it. The entire import of the illustration can strike us with a joyful amazement when we visualize the picture clearly. Imagine an observer looking up at the moon through the marching clouds in the sky. The observer is standing maximum 6 feet from the surface of the vast earth, observing the moon, that glows some thousands of miles away, through the clouds that are a couple of miles away from the observer. And yet, the observer cries " the cloud has covered the moon " or " the moon is running ". Similarly the Infinite Self, when viewed through the restlessness of the body, mind and intellect, appears as though the Self is agitated and active.

If there be a sufficient mental poise and the required scientific observation of the phenomena of life, an intelligent student can easily recognize that all agitations belong, in fact, to the matter-layers in us, and the Self is never involved in them. The moon seems to be moving, because we look at it through the moving medium of the clouds.

We recognize life as dynamic because we observe life through the vehicles of its expressions. Looking at a living creature, through its physical, mental and intellectual activities we say Life is dynamic, active and ever-pulsating. In fact Life as such is not active; the vehicles thrilled by life act and these actions are superimposed upon the Self; in this confused observation it seems as though the Self is active.

" I am the enjoyer ", " I am the doer ", are all ideas of the

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* व्यापृतेष्विन्द्रियेष्वात्मा
व्यापारीवाविवेकिनाम् ।
दृश्यतेऽभ्रेषु धावत्सु
धावन्निव यथा शशी ॥

intellect. The different ideas such as "I am this...... I am that" *etc.*, arise in the mind only when we are in the midst of the activities of the work-a-day-world and in the dream-world, for, when we are in deep-sleep we do not have any such ideas. It is only when the mind is available for perception and cognition that we come to know of the thing cognized.

As long as we identify ourselves with the mind, so long only can we claim to have the dual experiences in these planes of existence; but when once we have withdrawn ourselves from the mental plane, we realize that all thoughts, emotions and activities of the intellect, mind and body are *not* in the Self, nor are they *of* the Self. The delusory reflection of the Consciousness in the mental-pool which agitates with the panting egoistic idea of "I am the doer", "I am the enjoyer", *etc.*, cease when there are no thought eruptions therein.

> *** The tremblings that belong to the water are attributed through ignorance to the reflected moon dancing on it; likewise, agency of action, of enjoyment and of other limitations (which really belongs to the mind) are delusively understood as the nature of the Self.**

The example here is of an image of the moon reflected in a bucket of water which seems to shake when the water surface is disturbed. When the water calms down and becomes steady, we do see the scattered moon in the bucket-of-water re-assembling to form one whole. The moon was never broken up, but only appeared to be so due to the condition of the reflecting medium the water. Similarly :

> **** Attachment, desire, pleasure, pain etc., are perceived to exist so long as *Buddhi* or mind functions. They are not perceived in deep-sleep when the mind ceases to function. Therefore they belong to the mind alone, and not to the *Atman*.**

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* अज्ञानान्मानसोपाधेः
कर्तृत्वादीनि चात्मनि ।
कल्प्यन्तेऽम्बुगते चन्द्रे
चलनादि यथाम्भसः ॥ (At. Bdh–22)

As long as we are functioning through our mind we are under the tyranny of attachment, desire, pleasure, pain etc. But in deep-sleep when temporarily our minds are not effective in our-selves, all these tyrannies are at an end. When we look through green goggles, everything looks green. But when we look at things with naked eyes there is no green colour. Therefore the greenness is due to the goggles only. Therefore:

> ***** We should understand that the *Atman* is always like a King, distinct from the body, senses, mind and intellect, all of which constitute the matter (*Prakriti*), and is only the witness of their functions.**

The pure Self, the Spirit, is to be understand as distinct from and beyond the physical equipment constituted of the body mind and intellect, for, it is this Supreme Illuminator who illumines the subtle workings of the intellect, the grosser thoughts of the mind and the still grosser physical movements. In spite of all this seemingly interested association, It is ever a mere "witness" and never a participant. An illuminator is always separate from the objects illumined; the subject of experience cannot be the same as the objects of the same experience.

A king is not a participant in the drama and dance being enacted in his Darbar-hall; he is only a witness; and like him the *Atman* is a witness of the drama-of-life going on in this body and in the world outside — the microcosmic and the macrocosmic existence.

Subjectively analysed, the Self is a *witness* of the play of

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** रागेच्छासुखदुःखादि
वुद्धौ सत्यां प्रवर्तते।
सुषुप्तौ नास्ति तन्नाशे
तस्माद्‌वुद्धेस्तु नात्मनः॥ (At. bdh–23)

*** देहेन्द्रियमनोवुद्धि–
प्रकृतिभ्यो विलक्षणम्॥
तद्‌वृत्तिसाक्षिणं विद्या–
दात्मानं राजवत्सदा॥ (At. bdh–18)

matter. The ideas of good and bad, the knowledge of right and wrong, the feeling of joy and sorrow, the appreciation of beauty and ugliness, our sense of duty and neglect, etc., and the actions of the physical body, are all aspects of our inner and outer subjective life. These experiences, constituted of the knowledge of which we know and also of those which we do not know i.e., the positive experience of a thing and the nothingness of what we do not know — the *Bhava* and the *Abhava* — are all illumined for us by that one Awareness, the Pure Consciousness. It stands aloof and does not identify Itself with what is happening within ourselves in the different layers of matter. It is not the sharer of the experience; It is only an observer like the King in the Darbar-hall, a non-partisan in all affairs, disinterested in all happenings and yet All-powerful. Therefore Krishna says:

> *** He who sees all actions are performed by *Prakriti* alone and that the Self is actionless, really sees.**

Mind is the equipment that orders all types of action that should manifest. If the mind is bad, the life expressed through it will also be bad. All actions are according to the types of desires entertained by the intellect. Thus in the presence of the Spirit the "equipments" (*Prakriti*) function and the Self (*Atman*) functioning in the "Field" called the "knower-of-the-Field" (*Purusha*), acts in the world outside. When the "knower-of-the-Field" leaves the "Field", there is not any more activity in the "Field", nor is there any activity for the Self Itself. But the Spirit, identifying Itself with the "Field" (*Prakriti*), becomes the "knower-of-the-Field" (*Purusha*), and it is this "individualised ego" that acts and accomplishes.

The Self is All-pervading, Perfect and as such, there is no desire in it. Where desires are no more, actions cannot originate from there. In the Self there are no desires, and so, the Self neither acts nor gets reacted. Further:

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* प्रकृत्यैव च कर्माणि क्रियमाणानि सर्वशः।
यः पश्यति तथात्मानमकर्तारं स पश्यति॥

(Ge. Ch. XIII-30)

* **As the all-pervading Ether is not tainted because of its subtlety, so too, the self seated everywhere in the body, is not tainted.**

The Supreme Self is compared here with space to indicate Its relationship with Matter. *Akasha* (space) means "that which gives accommodation to things." It is the subtlest of all gross elements; and since greater subtlety implies greater pervasiveness, space pervades everything that is grosser than it.

A subtler thing cannot be conditioned by the grosser. Space, being subtlest it allows everything to remain in it; yet nothing that it contains can contaminate it. The Supreme Self, which is the very cause for the Space (*Akasha*) itself, is therefore subtler than the *Akasha*. It cannot be contaminated by anything that is existing or happening in the world of things or beings, because all these are supported by the Supreme Self.

The waves of the ocean cannot condition the waters of the ocean which are their very cause. Similarly, though the Self permeates and pervades the whole body and makes it active, It is never conditioned nor contaminated by any of the activities undertaken by the vehicles of Its expression.

Then what exactly is the function of the Spirit in the body?

** **Just as one Sun illuminates the whole world, so also, the Lord of the "Field" (*Paramatma*) illumines the whole world, O Bhaarata.**

This striking example given by Lord Krishna conveys to our intellectual comprehension the exact relationship of the Eternal

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* यथा सर्वगतं सौक्ष्म्यादाकाशं नोपलिप्यते।
सर्वत्रावस्थितो देहे तथात्मा नोपलिप्यते॥

(Ge. Ch. XIII–33)

** यथा प्रकाशयत्येकः कृत्स्नं लोकमिमं रविः।
क्षेत्रं क्षेत्री तथा कृत्स्नं प्रकाशयति भारत॥

(Ge. Ch. XIII–34)

Principle of Life, with reference to the various whirls of matter and their expressions. Just as the one Sun placed within the Universe illumines the entire Universe at all times, so too, the Consciousness merely illumines the world-of-objects, the body and its sensations, the mind and its feelings and the intellect and its thoughts.

Though in our general expression we attribute the activity of lighting up the world to the sun, we cannot in reality attribute any such activity to the Sun. Only an action that has a beginning and an end and that is generally undertaken to fulfil a deep desire or a purpose, can be attributed to the source of action. The Sun is not illuminating the world in this sense of the term. On the other hand, light itself is the nature of the Sun, and in its presence everything gets automatically illumined. Similarly Consciousness is of the nature of awareness and in Its presence, everything becomes known *i.e.*, illumined.

In this solar system there is only one Sun and it illumines everything on the Earth, the good and the bad, the virtuous and the vicious, the beautiful and the ugly. And yet, the Sun is not sullied by the bad, the vicious and the ugly, nor is it blessed by the good, the virtuous or the beautiful. So too, in our inner life, the Ever-perfect Consciousness functions through the equipments and illumines them, but It never gets contaminated by the sins of the mind or by the perversions of the intellect or by the crimes of the physical body. It only illumines!

The Illuminator in all is the One Consciousness by which everything is known intellectually, realized intuitively, and experienced spiritually. Since the Consciousness in us brings our varied experiences within our understanding and knowledge, it is generally compared to light. To see an object, it is not only necessary that the object should be in the line of sight of the eyes, but the object must also be bathed in light. Taking this experience of cognition in the outer world as an illustrative analogy, within us too, we must have some "Light" to illumine, since we can see and have the knowledge of the different types of emotions and thoughts that arise and exist in our bosom. This Light-of-wisdom, by which we become aware of our own mental and

intellectual conditions at any given moment, is called the "Light" of the Soul, or the Self, the Consciousness.

The moment the student comes across such an expression, he is apt to misunderstand it as the *light* he has experienced in the world. The brilliance of the light experienced in the outer world belongs to the realm-of-objects, and it cannot be the subject that is conscious of it. Therefore it is necessary that the teacher should indicate, in someway, what exactly is meant by such terms as " the illumination of the soul ", " the Effulgence of the Self ", " the Incandescence of the Consciousness ". Therefore Krishna says :

> * **That Light, the Light-of-all-lights, is said to be beyond darkness; (It is) Knowledge, the Object-of-Knowledge, seated in the hearts of all, is to be reached by knowledge.**

Krishna indicates here that the Self in each is the " Light " which illumines all other perceptible lights! Even the Sun has no power of illuminating the world of the living beings if the Consciousness in them does not illumine it. Light as a principle manifested can serve our world only when it comes into our awareness. Thus, all sources of light are illumined by our Consciousness. Therefore, the Self or *Atman* is indicated as the Subject that illumines the entire world of objectified light.

Even after the indication that the Self is Consciousness that illumines all other lights of the world, the impression of Light as an object of experience, is so powerful in our finite intellect that the average student will still retain only his " relative concept " of light. Therefore it is said here that it is beyond darkness also.

In the world outside, light, in its empirical sense, is that which we comprehend as a contrast to darkness. If there were no light, there would have been no days. In the Sun there is no meaning for the word light since the Sun knows no darkness!

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* ज्योतिषामपि तज्ज्योतिस्तमसः परमुच्यते ।
ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं ज्ञानगम्यं हृदि सर्वस्य विष्ठितम् ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIII–18)

Thus to indicate the Absolute nature of the Infinite "Light" of the Soul, it is stated here that it is beyond the concept of darkness; it is Absolute Light, the Consciousness.

Even to say that *there is* darkness, we must be conscious of it. The "Light" of awareness is so subtle and Absolute, that it illumines not only the various sources of light in the world, but also the experience of darkness itself! That which illumines both light and darkness must be a factor that transcends both these experiences. Therefore, the Spirit is indicated as that which transcends even darkness.

The second line of the stanza indicates that the Self is (*a*) Knowledge (*Jnanam*), (*b*) that which is to be known (*Jneyam*) and (*c*) that which is to be reached by knowledge (*Jnana-gamyam*). In short the Consciousness that transcends our experiences and illumines our life is the very goal in all spiritual endeavours at all times and everywhere.

If there is an Infinite light of Knowledge to be known, without which life is impossible and in the presence of which alone all the experiences can have a meaning and existence, then this Infinite Goal is certainly to be acquired and possessed. Where can we seek it? Are we in possession of It now? or is It something to be experienced yonder in some unknown time and place? To negate all such mis-conceptions, it is clearly declared here that this Infinite Self dwells in the hearts of all. The Self not only dwells in the heart of all, but functioning in every individual, It is the One and the same everywhere.

> * **Without and within (all) beings, the "moving" and also the "unmoving" because of its subtlety (it Is) unknowable; and near and far away — is That.**

The Conscious Principle that bursts Itself into activity through the various individualized equipments is All-pervading,

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* बहिरन्तश्च भूतानामचरं चरमेव च।
सूक्ष्मत्वात्तदविज्ञेयं दूरस्थं चान्तिके च तत्॥

(Ge. Ch. XIII-16)

and therefore in an unmanifested condition It is present even where no special equipment is available. Even though we can listen to our national radio broadcasts only through available receiving sets, we cannot say that there are no electrical sound waves in places where there are no receiving sets. Where there is a body, mind and intellect ready to function, there no doubt is the expression of Consciousness. But Consciousness is All-pervading not only within the equipment but even outside it, in the moving (alive) and the unmoving (inert).

Moving and Unmoving : This phrase is sometimes explained " Unmoving and yet Moving "; the Truth in Its Absolute nature is motionless — there is no place where It is not and towards which It can move since It is everywhere — and yet, conditioned by the things It is moving. *It looks as though* It has movement. Sitting in a bus you can travel a long distance, yourself only sitting! The bus travels and therefore, in yourself though there is no motion, yet you, conditioned by (carried by) the bus become the traveller.

Thus there is a Conscious Principle, revelling as the very core in our personality, which is not only within but which is everywhere, without which no activity is ever possible, and so, which is in every activity. It is manifested everywhere. Then how is it that we are not able to perceive It, or feel It, or intellectually comprehend It ?

The grosser a thing, the more perceptible it is. Earth can be smelt, tasted, seen and felt. Water has no smell. Fire cannot be tasted. Air cannot be seen. Space!!

Cause is always subtler than (or equal to in subtlety) the effect. Space itself being a gross product must have a cause. That which is the cause for *Akasa* is the Eternal Substratum, from which all the Elements have arisen. Consciousness being the " Subtlest of the subtle ", pervading even *Akasa,* is incomprehensible to the gross equipments of thought, feeling and perception.

Consciousness being the subtlest and All-pervading, must

be at once "here" and "there", and therefore, it is *near* and *far*. This phrase has been sometimes interpreted as "*Far and yet Near*". In its Transcendental Absolute nature the Truth is *Far Away* from the apparent names and forms, which in their aggregate, constitute the Universe, but at the same time as Existence, Truth exists very *Near* in every name and form.

Even though All-pervading and hence undivided, the same Supreme Spirit, the Self exists as if divided in beings as the individual Self. Electricity is All-pervading, and yet, conditioned by the bulb it manifests as effulgence at the filament. So too, though the *Paramatman* is All-pervading, It individualizes Itself as special manifestations only at points where equipments are available for Its expression. Though space is one, it can manifest as pot-space, room-space etc., only when seemingly conditioned by the pot or the walls of the room.

> *** And though undivided, yet He exists as if divided in beings; That is to be known as the supporter of beings; He devours and He generates.**

This *Atman*, existing as if divided in the individuals is the supporter of Life in all beings, and also the substratum on which all experiences are generated and dissolved into. The ocean is the supporter of all waves; waves are born from the ocean, and they are devoured by the same ocean. This Absolute Non-dual Trancendental Reality, in Its subtle All-pervading nature is also immanent, and can be realized by every seeker as his own real True Nature.

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* अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तमिव च स्थितम् ।
भूतभर्तृ च तज्ज्ञेयं ग्रसिष्णु प्रभविष्णु च ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIII-17)

The individual is nothing but the Supreme itself, in as much as the individual has arisen from It, exists in It, and merges back into It. The example of a spark from a big fire is made use of here to explain this truth. The spark has arisen from the fire, and it floats about and around the same fireplace, not very far away, and when it has exhausted itself in eating up the material, the ash is thrown out, and the fire in the spark disappears; since it cannot go anywhere else, it merges with the very fire in the fire-place.

It is a theory in philosophy, borne out by scientific observations also, that an effect can perish to become the cause itself; the tree dies away to become another tree; water, when decomposed, becomes but hydrogen and oxygen; a physical structure made up of the five elements rots to become nothing but the five elements; all oranaments made of gold can change only to become a mass of gold. Similarly, a spark of fire riding on a little matter, seems to have wandered away from the main fire and exists as such only during such time as it has not finished away with its eating up of the matter. It is only a conditioned fire that comes out as a spark, and the spark exists only so long as the conditioning exists. When the consumable matter has been reduced to a speck of ash, the fire-essence in the spark rolls back into the total fire in the fire-place.

Similarly, an individual seems to exist, exhibiting all the qualities of reality, only so long as the conditioning is not eaten up. A *Jeeva* is born only to burn up the fruits-of-actions, and when this is accomplished, the body falls down to perish and the spark-of-life rolls back to merge with the total life.

And yet, to say that something is born out of the Supreme Spirit would be a false philosophical statement, since the cause will have to die away to become the effect. The gold piece must get itself destroyed in becoming the chain. The seed must perish to bring forth the tree out of itself. Similarly, if 'Life' were to come from the *Atman*, it would be amounting to saying that the *Supreme Reality* has destroyed itself to become the individual life, the *Prana*. Therefore the *Rishi* says:

> * This *Prana* is born of the *Atman*. As the shadow is in the man, so is the *Prana* in the *Atman*. By the action of the mind this enters into the body.

Because of the philosophical contradiction, mentioned earlier, the *Rishi* is compelled to add here a codicil and explain that the *Prana* (*Jeeva*) is to the *Atman* what the shadow is to a person. A shadow or reflection is caused because of the object, but at the same time the object is not reduced or tampered with because its shadow has emerged out of it.

Similarly, the individual Life, the *Prana*, is but the reflection of Pure Consciousness in our mind and intellect. Consciousness or Awareness, when It works through the "flow-of-thoughts"—the mind—expresses Itself in a "reflection" (shadow) which is the ego-centric personality that we come to recognize almost always as ourselves. This ego-centre is always conditioned by the texture of our thoughts and the quality of their flow. When sad thoughts are flowing, the ego—"I",—is sad; when joyous thoughts are gliding down the avenues of the mind, Consciousness reflected therein, the—"I"—is happy and joyous.

This ego-centre has thus been created certainly out of the *Atman*, but at the same time, the ego has not got any independent existence apart from the Divine Spark, our own Self. In the language of the *Rishis*, briefly stated, it becomes, "*Prana is the shadow of the Atman*".

If you sit on a stool at a dressing table, three mirrors on it may reflect to give you a set of three different reflections of your single form. Because of the three distinct reflections that have been "caused" by you, you have not lost anything. Similarly, the Pure Awareness, reflecting in our mind and thereby creating the ego-centre, has not destroyed Itself in any manner.

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* आत्मन एष प्राणो जायते।
यथैष पुरुषे च्छायैतस्मिन्नेतदाततं
मनोकृतेनायात्यस्मिन् शरीरे॥

(Pr. Up. Q. III-3)

In this *Brahmana* we have the answer for the next natural estion also, which will be to enquire into the manner in which e *Prana* has come to get itself housed as an active centre within ur own body. It has come to express itself in this body because f the willing or wishing or desiring, which are all activities of the mind. When a cup is placed in midday sunlight and some water is poured into it, we all know that we will have a reflection of the Sun in the cup of water. Looking at that water, if we were to wonder how did the Sun come to appear in the cup, the only answer we could give is that it is created by the water; and they alone understand the statement who can follow the argument.

There may be some uneducated ones who would wonder how water in the cup can "create" the sun! In fact, the water never "created" the sun. Water in the cup became a reflecting surface, and all reflecting surfaces must reflect the objects in front of them. So too the *Atman* "created" the *Prana* or the *Jeeva*, when the mind a reflecting medium, came to be apparently placed in front of it.

No doubt, the *Atman* being Infinite, is by Its very nature All-pervading. Although It is available for the cognition in all objects, in the pure mind-intellect (*Buddhi*) alone can we come to realize the Self in all Its essential splendour, just as in a clean polished mirror alone are we able to see our reflection clearly, although according to the principles of reflection our faces can be reflected by all objects. According to Physics light falling on our face gets reflected and the reflected light-rays again get reflected at the reflecting surface; and when they fall on the retina of our eye, we see our reflection. This process goes on even on a rough granite wall-surface, but we don't see our reflection there because of the poor reflecting quality of the surface, Similarly:

> * The *Atman* is not perceived in everything although He is All-pervading. He is manifest only in the inner

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* सदा सर्वगतोऽप्यात्मा
न सर्वत्रावभासते ।
बुद्धावेवावभासेत
स्वच्छेषु प्रतिबिम्बवत् ॥

(At. Bdh. –17)

equipment, the intellect *(Buddhi)* just as there is reflection only in a clean mirror.

Again let us take the example of our Government. It functions from the Capital of our country, New Delhi, but it sounds odd if we really think that the Government is in New Delhi alone and not in other parts of India. The Government may have its head-quarters in the North, but even in a little home away in the South, the overall hold and grace of the Government apply equally. On every inch of the country it has its sway. Its laws are applicable throughout the length and breadth of the land. Yet, to meet the Government one must go to New Delhi. So too, although the Lord, the Supreme *Brahman,* who is the substratum for all this plurality, is *within* us as well as *without* us, it is only in the subtle intellect *(Buddhi)* purified and steadied that it is to be clearly seen fully "reflected".

This concept can be easily explained through an illustration. Imagine a wall on which sunlight is spread all over evenly. Take a plane mirror and flash on to the wall a beam of the sunlight The spot where the reflected light from the mirror falls is certainly a particular spot, brighter and more easily distinguishable in the sunlit wall area. You may, by tilting the mirror slightly, change the position of the reflection on the wall. But wherever the reflected beam is, arround it would always be the light which is spread out generally all over the wall. The beam from the mirror only adds to the intensity at its point of striking on the very surface.

The difference between man and man, man and animal, and the plurality are all created by the difference in the "reflecting" surfaces, though the Source of Light, the *Atman* is the same. Only you may have some mirrors which are dusty, some clear and others plain or curved etc.

We have so far examined the Illuminating Factor, the *Chaitanya* in us, with the aid of a metaphor from a beam of light striking a reflecting surface and producing a patch of reflection. The reflection thus thrown forth by the intellect is technically called in *Vedanta* as "*Chitabhasa*"; *Chit,* the *Chaitanya* or the Illuminator, and *Abhasa* meaning Its reflection. Just as the Sun is

seen reflected in a pool of water, so too, the *Chitabhasa* is recognized in the mental pool when the Light of *Atman* strikes the mind. This *Chitabhasa,* thus playing a false dallying in the mental threatre, is the false toy-monster called the Ego.

Having been conditioned by the intellect, the *Jeeva* becomes identified with it and behaves as though he is the experiencer of the joys and sorrows of life. All this is indeed false. But because of this identification, he understands himself to be a separate entity and starts seeking Truth—which is his own very nature. He believes that Truth is something other than he himself. This fallacy in the notion of God being some one other than the devotee, is being brought out very clearly by Shankara in the following stanza.

> * **This *Atman*, although It is the Self in every existing thing, assumes the limitations of the intellect, and wrongly identifies with this entirely false entity; It considers Itself as something different—like the mud-pots being thought different from the mud of which they are made.**

The *Atman,* the Supreme Intelligence, eternally self-effulgent, shines ever-bright at the Centre of the human heart. It gets reflected as it strikes against our intelligence. The reflection, as we know, depends entirely upon the nature and condition of the reflecting surface. At the moment of mental and intellectual agitation, the *Chitabhasa* seems to tremble and dance in mad revelry. When the intellect is dimmed by the fumes of jealousy, anger, passion and lust, the ego-centric entity in us undergoes a corresponding modification. When the mind and intellect equipment is dimmed by the fumes of desire, jealousy, anger, passion, lust, etc., it loses its power of right discrimination, and superimposes the qualities of the body-mind-intellect on the pure Self. Thereafter the deluded mistakes his Real Self to be the one possess-

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* स्वयं परिच्छेदमुपेत्य बुद्धे-
स्तादात्म्यदोषेण परं मृषात्मनः।
सर्वात्मकः सन्नपि वीक्षते स्वयं
स्वतः पृथक्त्वेन मृदो घटानिव ॥

(VC–190)

ing all the imperfections of the superimposed equipments. This non-discrimination is like the misconception which makes children believe that the sky is blue when actually it has no colour at all.

> * **Fools, because they lack on their powers of discrimination, superimpose on the *Atman*, the Absolute-Existence-Knowledge, all the varied functions of the body and the senses, just as they attribute blue colour and the like to the sky.**

Not only the blueness but the concavity of the sky, murkiness, musty look, dusty condition, are all often considered as properties of the sky. In fact, Space appears as having these qualities but really Space as such has none of them. The blueness perceived is the experience of our deluded mind and intellect when it looks at the endless summer sky through our limited vision. Just as the sky is not affected by the traits superimposed upon it, so too, when we superimpose certain characteristics of the body, mind and intellect upon the Self-effulgent Being, the Truth itself is not affected by such misconceived notions and attributes.

The nature of the Infinite Consciousness everywhere and at all times is one-without-a-second. Even then, out of delusion, It comes to accept the conditionings as real and continues to identify with the matter-vestures. Having identified with the conditioning, It suffers from its sense of limitations. But really speaking the *Atman* is never deluded. In the dream the waker apparently becomes the dreamer, but the waker is never confused. Similarly, by such identifications the qualities of the body, mind and intellect are assumed to be temporarily one's own properties, and so one becomes the limited ego, the *Jeeva*. This is the bondage, the limitation, the delusion. The mind perpetrates all these and the individual starts behaving like a separate entity and suffers the sorrows of "I" and "mine".

* देहेन्द्रियगुणान्कर्मा-
ण्यमले सच्चिदात्मनि ।
अध्यस्यन्त्यविवेकेन
गगने नीलतादिवत् ॥

(At. Bdh.-21)

*** Unattached Pure Intelligence is the essence of the *Jeeva*, but the mind beguiles it and binds it by ties of body, sense-organs and *Pranas*. It causes this *Jeeva* to wander with the idea of "I" and "mine" in the varied experiences of "results" gathered by itself.**

Out of the Supreme Reality, *Brahman*, which is ever unattached to the matter vestures and the very nature of which is Absolute Knowledge, a mortal, limited *Jeeva* is created by the mind. The mind plays this trick by first deluding itself, by forgetting its real nature. Having achieved this veiling of the Reality, the mind makes It attached to the matter vestures.

How did this mental delusion arise ? Why is it that such a glorious Essential Truth, which is the core of everyone, is not freely known and experienced by everyone at all times ? What stands between me and my Self ? Why is it that we behave as though we are but limited ego-centric entities, incapacitated to comprehend that we are in essence the Immortal ? These ought to be the natural questions in the readers' minds. An attempt to explain this stumbling doubt in the minds of the seekers has been made in *Vedanta* by the introduction of the concept of *Maya*. Hence the following statement from Lord Krishna in the *Geeta:*

**** Veiled by Divine "*Maya*" I am not manifest to all (in my real nature). This deluded world knows not Me, the Unborn, the Imperishable.**

"*Maya*" is the most difficult theme of all for elementary students of *Vedanta*, when they try to understand the Science of Life objectively. But the moment a student tries to experi-

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* असंगचिद्रूपममुं विमोह्य
देहेन्द्रियप्राणगुणैर्निबद्ध्य
अहंममेति भ्रमयत्यजस्रं
मनः स्वकृत्येषु फलोपभुक्तिषु ॥ (VC–178)

** नाहं प्रकाशः सर्वस्य योगमायासमावृतः ।
मूढोऽयं नाभिजानाति लोको मामजमव्ययम् ॥

(Ge. Ch. VII–25)

ment with this concept upon himself subjectively, the explanations contained on this theory become evident.

Maya is defined as an inexplicable power of the Supreme which is in That, as inseparable as heat from fire. We cannot have fire as a "thing in itself" after removing all the heat from it, nor can heat have an existence if the fire element is removed from it; so too *Maya* is a power inherent in the Supreme. *Maya* is the conditioning through which, when the Non-dual Truth expresses Itself, the one Reality seems to spread out as the spectrum of the multiple universe.

On a superficial understanding of this term, we may get a growing suspicion that *Maya* is a tricky word, introduced by the *Vedantins* in their *Maya Vada*, to veil the main issues of a pointed question and to confuse the questioner with a mysterious nothing. But such a feeling can arise only out of the ignorance of the Sanskrit language; for the word *Maya* in its etymological meaning, stands for "that which is not" (*Yo Ma, Sa Maya*). It is *Maya*, a power of our mind, to get itself deluded, that creates for us the delusion of the snake-in-the-rope, the ghost-in-the-pot, the mirage-in-the-desert etc.

In *Vedanta* the famous story of Somadatta's father is often quoted to explain the *Maya* in us, deluding us, as it were, with our own active co-operation and sympathy! Let us examine this story.

One newly initiated anchorite during a pilgrimage felt tired and weary because of the hot day and the burning Sun. Seeing a shaded arbour near the Ganges banks, he took shelter under it to rest. There was a narrow slab of stone upon which he stretched and composed himself to a restful siesta. As he was dozing off, his attention was attracted by two young girls who had come to the Ganges to collect water. They filled their pots and went away, but the vision generated the following lines of thought in the half-sleepy anchorite. "Supposing I marry one of them! Then I shall have a little house with three spacious rooms. And I shall be a very severe and grave husband too! Working in my own fields I shall live a happy life of contentment and joy! Then

the first-born..........yes, I will have a fat, beautiful son. Of course, I must name him Somadatta. And we the three shall all sleep in the same bed ! But is there space enough for my son ? " Devi, please give some more space for our son, otherwise he might fall down." "Lord, how can I move ?" "To which side ?" "you move a bit to your end". "All right" .... he says..........and splash !

Poor Somadatta's father moved a little towards his side, and the stone was narrow. He lost his balance and rolled into the Ganges water. Awakened, the anchorite swam out and reached the shore.

The poor *Brahmacharin* created the world of Somadatta in himself, and identifying completely with it, came to live the dream life as though "real", and thus suffered the fall. The power in Somadatta's father, with which he "lived" his domestic life and ultimately fell into the Ganges, is *Maya:* "that which is not" in his own mind, yet existing as its own nature. Therefore *Acharya* Shankara explains *Maya* thus:

> * **It (*Maya*) is neither existent nor non-existent, nor both; neither same nor different, nor both; most wonderful it is and beyond description in words.**

This *Avidya* (*Maya*) cannot be said to have a separate existence from *Brahman*. Nor can it be said that it exists not, because we are enjoying and suffering it. It cannot be said that it "exists as well as does not exist", because a non-existent thing can never become existent, nor can an existent thing express itself as non-existent. We cannot say that the ghost in the post "exists", nor can we say, "it exists not", because we sweat and perspire when we "see" it.

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* सन्नाप्यसन्नाप्युभयात्मिका नो
भिन्नाप्यभिन्नाप्युभयात्मिका नो।
साङ्गाप्यनङ्गा ह्युभयात्मिका नो।
महाद्भुताऽनिर्वचनीयरूपा ॥

(VC-109)

Also it cannot be said that this great *Maya* exists and is other than *Brahman*, because *Brahman* is One-without-a-second. To say that this *Maya* is " with the Lord as well as without Lord " is again a contradiction in terms. Then what is this *Maya* (*Avidya*) ?

All that we can say about it is that it is a " great wonder ". It can only be said to be indescribable (*Anirvachaneeya*). There is a wonder when the intellect is not able to comprehend a thing. Anything that I see and my intellect is not able to explain, I say is a " wonder ". The more I think about this *Avidya*, the more my intellect fails, because this *Avidya* is the very cause for the intellect. The intellect cannot comprehend its own cause because it is the child born out of *Maya*, and a child cannot go back to look at the womb. This *Maya* when it manifests becomes the intellect and mind. Therefore the intellect cannot comprehend the unmanifest which is its own cause.

Then what is this *Avidya?* *Acharya* Shankara says:

> * Apart from the mind there is no ignorance (*Avidya*). The mind itself is the ignorance which is the cause for the bondage of rebirth. When the mind is destroyed, everything else is destroyed. When the mind manifests, everything else manifests.

All *Avidya* put together is *Maya*. *Maya* is constituted of the three *Gunas—Sattwa, Rajas* and *Tamas*. These function only in the mind. Therefore other than the mind, there is no *Avidya*. Mind alone is *Avidya*. It is the cause for all the bondages. How? We shall see:

> * The mind causes man's attachments for the body and the sense-objects. These attachments bind him

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* न ह्यस्त्यविद्या मनसोऽतिरिक्ता
मनो ह्यविद्या भवबन्धहेतुः ।
तस्मिन्विनष्टे सकलं विनष्टं
विजृम्भितेऽस्मिन्सकलं विजृम्भते ॥

(VC-169)

> as an animal that is bound by ropes. Thereafter the same mind creates a distaste for the very same sense-objects as though they were poison and, liberates man from his bondage.

From the stand-point of the mind, the body, the sense-organs and the objects of the world are all "objects". Not only does the mind project all these but having projected them, it further creates an attachment in man for these "objects". By this attachment, he gets bound and becomes limited and sorrowful. Thus *Atman* the Self, apparently tied down, is the *Jeeva*, the individuality. Its freedom having all gone, it lives as an abject slave of the mind, as a deluded bird in front of a mirror.

Though the infinite heavens invite the bird to fly freely and enjoy, it does not leave the mirror in the verandah, because of the attachment it has created for its own reflection in the mirror. Nobody wants to give up the object of his attachment and liking.

On account of the attachment for objects thus created, the individual gets bound like an elephant trapped and bound with a rope. When an animal is tied down with a rope, it has only a limited freedom commensurate with the length of the rope. Similarly, when the Infinite Consciousness is (apparently) bound by the *Gunas*, It seems to have lost Its omnipotency and omnisciency and become the limited *Jeeva*, but this individuality also has a limited freedom sanctioned by the proportion of its *Gunas* in the mind. The same mind is useful to liberate the *Jeeva* from this bondage, so that it may revert to its original nature, the pristine glory of divine omnisciency and omnipotency.

The *Atman* which is one's Real Nature is never bound. Then where is the question of release for It ? Liberation is only with reference to bondage. When one is really liberated, there is

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• देहादिसर्वविषये परिकल्प्य रागं
बध्नाति तेन पुरुषं पशुवद्गुणेन ।
वैराग्यमत्र विषवत्सुविधाय पश्चा-
देनं विमोचयति तन्मन एव बन्धात् ॥

(VC-173)

neither any bondage nor any release. One is just "That" Therefore, because of the reasons explained so far, it is now clear that the mind alone is the cause for bondage as well as liberation. The feeling in man that he is bound or that he is liberated, is only *the state of his mind.*

> *** Therefore, the mind is the cause for liberation as well as bondage. When it is blemished with the effects of *Rajas*, it causes bondage. When it is free from the *Rajas* and *Tamas* qualities, it paves the way to liberation.**

The conditions of bondage and liberation are only states interpreted with reference to the condition of the mind. Whenever it is in constant agitation, the individual is in bondage. *Rajoguna* is the cause for the agitations of the mind. This *Rajoguna* comes into play because of *Tamoguna*, the non-apprehension of Reality. Whenever there is in the mind a preponderance of *Rajas* and *Tamas*, it is agitated and therefore is in bondage. When the taints are removed and it is quietened, that is, when it becomes predominantly *Sattwic*, one has the experience that one is free and so totally liberated.

Sattwa, *Rajas* and *Tamas* are the three " climatic conditions " as it were, under which thoughts in the mind function, *Sattwa* functioning as the power of discrimination (*Jnana-shakti*), *Rajas* functioning as the power to strive (*Kriya-shakti*) and *Tamas* functioning as the power to desire (*Icha-shakti*). From these alone various manifestations and experiences arise. These three powers in their aggregate are called the *Maya-shakti*, which is beyond the sense perceptions. Only its effects can be perceived; we do not perceive what electricity is except through its manifestations. When a particular tendency manifests in an individual then only it can be recognized that it is due to that parti-

* तस्मान्मनः कारणमस्य जन्तो-
बंधस्य मोक्षस्य च वा विधाने।
बन्धस्य हेतुर्मलिनं रजोगुणं-
मोक्षस्य शद्धं विरजस्तमस्कम्॥

(VC-174)

cular *Guna* that is predominant in his mind at the moment.

The *Tamas* quality in us acts as the veiling of Truth, the Self in us. The first of the main tragedies, born out of the veiling Power (*Avarana-shakti*) in us, is that, left to ourselves, very few of us have in us the ability to observe analyse and conclude independently that there is an Immutable Principle behind the ever-changing flux in the phenomenal world. It is from this non-apprehension that the tree of *Samsar* grows and binds man to a life of eternal activity, birth and death.

The great Self is Immutable, Eternal and One-without-a-second. The glory of the Self is never away from us. It is always present in us illumining both the inner pulsations of the mind and the outer presence of objects. Even though this Consciousness is always present in us, it is not readily available for our cognition because of the veiling over it, created by the *Tamas*.

How does this great Consciousness come to be covered by *Tamas?* How can ignorance cover knowledge? *Acharya* Shankara answers these doubts with an illustrative example from Nature as in the case of the *Solar* eclipse.

> * *Avriti* (the veiling power) is of the nature of *Tamas* (ignorance). It covers the Self whose glories are infinite, who is the Indivisible, Eternal and One-without-a-second, just as *Rahu* covers the Sun during a Solar eclipse.

When the moon comes exactly in a line between the Sun and the observer (on the earth), the phenomenon is termed as a Solar eclipse. In fact, the moon only " covers " the Sun from the vision of the observer. How can the moon really cover the sun? The moon does not and cannot cover the Sun since the Sun is very far

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* अखण्डनित्याद्वयबोधशक्त्या
स्फुरन्तमात्मानमनन्तवैभवम् ।
समावृणोत्यावृतिशक्तिरेषा
तमोमयी राहुरिवार्कबिम्बम् ॥

(VC–139)

away. The moon has obstructed the observer's vision of the Sun, and from his stand point, the Sun is said to be completely covered. If he could move away a little from the shadow cone of the moon, he will see that the Sun is not covered at all.

Applying the above example subjectively, as long as there is the mind between me and my Self, the glory of the Self is veiled from me. Mind is the manifestation of *Avidya*, the non-apprehension of Reality caused by *Tamas*.

When the divine light of the Self, the great light of Consciousness is veiled from man, he comes to consider the body (which is the not-Self) as his real Self. When his power of discrimination gets clouded by the gathering *Tamas* in him, the Self appears to be veiled and he, not knowing his real nature, believes himself to be his own body (body, here means, all the three bodies— the gross, the subtle and the causal). Then the whole gang of negative tendencies, desire anger, greed, delusion, passion and jealousy, come to bind his personality to his lower ego, and as a *Samsarin* he lives in never ending pains and agonies.

> * **When a man's own Self of purest splendour is hidden from his direct experience, that man, due to ignorance, comes to identify himself falsely with his body which is the not-self. Then the merciless persecution of *Rajas* (Projecting Power) binds him down with fetters of lust, anger etc.**

All thoughts in the human mind can be classified into the above six categories, and all the six have the nature of binding the individual to the lower, the baser aspect of his personality. Qualities are called *Gunas*, and in Sanskrit *Guna* also means "rope". These *Gunas* (ropes) shackle man.

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* तिरोभूते स्वात्मन्यमलतरतेजोवति पुमा–
ननात्मानं मोहादहमिति शरीरं कलयति।
ततः कामक्रोधप्रभृतिभिरमुं बन्धनगुणैः
परं विक्षेपाख्या रजस उरुशक्तिर्व्यथयति॥

(VC–140)

When the knowledge of the Self is veiled by *Tamas*, the concept of "I am the body" comes first. Then, consequently, the baser agitations arise in the mind and bind the individual. Thereafter he has no freedom at all to live the life of his real blissful nature.

There are six types of emotions which arise in the ignorant man; desire (*Kama*), anger (*Krodha*), greed (*Lobha*), delusion (*Moha*) passion (*Mada*), and jealousy (*Matsarya*). All these spring from the power of agitations in the mind (*Vikshepa*). When this power projects the world of likes and dislikes, the individual gets afflicted and suffers the agonies of life in the world. All this suffering is because of *Tamoguna* acting as the veiling and *Rajoguna* acting as the agitations in the mind. *Sattwa, Rajas* and *Tamas* are together called *Maya,* the *Avidya,* the causal-body or the *Vasanas* of the individual.

The *Rajas* attitude of *Maya* creates the agitations of the mind (*vikshepa*). *Maya* expressed at the mental level manifests in the form of mental agitations. That aspect of *Maya* which creates agitations in the mind is called *Rajoguna*, from which all activities originate.

> * *Rajas* **has projecting power (*Vikshepa-shakti*). Activity is its very nature. From it the initial flow of activity has originated. From it mental modifications such as attachment and grief are also continuously produced.**

When the mind is active, we act in the world outside. When the mind is quiet, all actions stop. During deep-sleep the mind is at rest and is calm; therefore no activity is taking place. Activities are only possible when the mind is active. A mental picture exists before every activity. We see a possibility, until

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* विक्षेपशक्ती रजसः क्रियात्मिका
यतः प्रवृत्तिः प्रसृता पुराणी।
रागादयोऽस्य: प्रभवन्ति नित्यं
दुःखादयो ये मनसो विकाराः॥

(VC–111)

it becomes an agitation; then desires and passions arise in the mind. To satisfy them, man has to act in the world outside. This nature of the mind is called *Rajoguna.*

Such an individual cannot control his mind. He may conquer the whole world, but conquering his own mind is no easy job. As long as the "veiling-power" (*Avarana-shakti*) is not completely removed, so long the "projecting-power" (*Vikshepa-shakti*) will naturally make the individual restless. As long as there is "non-apprehension" of the Reality, the "mis-apprehensions" will continue.

The *Tamoguna* of the mind acts as the "Power of Veiling" by which Reality, the Self is veiled from our cognition, and things are perceived as something other than what they actually are. *Tamas* veils Reality and *Rajas* creates agitations in the mind. As a result of the combination of these two we see things which are foreign to their real nature. Therefore *Acharya* Shankara says :

> *** The veiling power (*Avriti*) is the power of *Tamas*, which makes things appear to be other than what they actually are. It causes man's repeated transmigration and initiates the action of the projecting power (*Vikshepa*).**

So far we have understood how man comes to suffer the persecutions of the world. The *Tamasic* aspect of *Maya* veils the intellect, and so the intellect cannot have the right judgement of things. When the intellect is veiled by *Tamas*, the mind under the influence of *Rajas*, projects wrong ideas of things perceived by the sense-organs. The individual then gets agitated.

When a rope in semi-darkness is not recognized as a rope,

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* एषाऽऽवृतिर्नाम तमोगुणस्य
शक्तिर्यया वस्त्ववभासतेऽन्यथा ।
सैषा निदानं पुरुषस्य संसृते-
र्विक्षेपशक्तेः प्रवणस्य हेतुः ॥

(VC-113)

man suffers from the mis-conceptions projected by his own mind, that it is a serpent. Similarly, due to the *Tamas* in me. I am not able to realize subjectively the nature of the Self, the *Atman* in me. In its place I recognize the subject-object world of experiences caused by the *Rajas* in me. Not only do I not know that I am the Self, the *Atman,* but in its place I experience the limitations of the equipment of the body, mind and intellect.

Thereafter, considering myself to be the body, the mind and the intellect, I function in the world of objects, emotions and thoughts, creating more and more *Vasanas* for myself. In order to exhaust these *Vasanas,* I must necessarily search for another physical body when the present one drops off. Thus the cycle of births and deaths goes on, until all the *Vasanas* are exhausted. All this is only because our Real Nature is not clearly apprehended and because our inner personality is poisoned by *Rajas* and *Tamas.*

Normally everyone believes himself to be the gross body. An emotional man may consider himself to be an emotional entity. A modern rational man may think of himself as an intellectual being. Thus confused they move about satisfying their physical, emotional and intellectual needs. Each man acts according to his peculiar delusion. Thus they move like mad men, from one place to another, from one time to another, from one cradle to one grave and another cradle to another grave........ alas! endlessly. All this is due to the effects of *Tamas* and *Rajas.*

> * **Man's bondage has sprung forth from these two "powers". Deluded by them, he mistakes his body for the Self and wanders from life to life.**

Because of the two powers of veiling and agitations arising out of *Tamas* and *Rajas,* man has reached his present state of bondage and has become limited. When the individual allows him-

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* एताभ्यामेव शक्तिभ्यां बन्धः पुंसः समागतः ।
याभ्यां विमोहितो देहं मत्वाऽऽत्मानं भ्रामत्ययम् ॥

(VC–144)

self to be confused and beguiled by these two—the *avarana-shakti* and the *vikshepa-shakti*— he considers himself to be his body (the gross, subtle and causal bodies) and gets bound by them.

The ever changing experiences of the world, both outside and within oneself, and thier consequent joys and sorrows constitute what is called *Samsar*. Invariably there is inherent sorrow in the phenomenon of change. Where there is change there is agitation, and agitation is the expression of sorrow. The root of all these is the mis-apprehension arising out of the non-apprehension of Reality. This misapprehension otherwise called superimposition, is termed as *"Adhyasa"* in *Vedanta*.

When the truth of a thing is not correctly seen as it is in our error of judgement, we see another object substituted in its place. This trick of the mind is called super-imposition, *"Adhyasa"* or its power of self-projection, which brings in its wake the sorrows of bondage and transmigration to the *Jeeva*.

> * The evil of superimposition causes man's transmigration and the mind alone is responsible for this bondage of superimposition. For a man who is tainted with *Rajas* and *Tamas* and who lacks discrimination, this causes the misery of birth, death etc.

When a rope lying on the ground in semi-darkness is not seen as a rope, our error of judgement gives us the misconception that it is a snake or a streak of water or a piece of wood or a crack in the earth. When such superimposition starts, the superimposed illusion completely covers the "reality"; when the serpent is seen, the serpent covers the rope completely. When Truth is not recognized as Truth, there is no sorrow; it is only ignorance; but when ignorance breeds misapprehension, then sorrow arises. Therefore sorrow is not in the non-apprehension,

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* अध्यासदोषात्पुरुषस्य संसृति–
रध्यासबन्धस्त्वमुनैव कल्पितः ।
रजस्तमोदोषवतोऽविवेकिनो
जन्मादिदुःखस्य निदानमेतत् ॥

(VC-179)

but is inherent in the misapprehension. In deep-sleep we are in ignorance, pure non-apprehension, and there is no sorrow in it. In fact, there is much truth in the saying, "Ignorance is bliss".

This theme of superimposition—"*Adhyasa*"— is very exhaustively discussed by *Acharya* Shankara in his introduction to the *Brahmasutras*. He says that the phenomenon of superimposition is not one sided. Not only is Truth misapprehended as an illusion, but the illusion is firmly understood as the Truth. This is possible because the illusion itself follows certain laws.

When a rope is not seen as a rope, never do we, in delusion, see an elephant or a cow or a building instead of the rope. Upon a post a ghost or a man can be superimposed but never a cow or a snake. Here it is clear that although it be only a superimposition, still it follows certain laws.

When a snake is seen in place of a rope, the illusory snake-form of the rope and the *dharmas* of the snake are superimposed. The colour, the shape and the rough surafce of the rope are not seen, but the colour, the shape and the smooth surface of the *snake* are seen instead. When these *dharmas* of the snake are seen we say, the snake IS: the snake exists. In fact, the snake IS NOT and the rope IS; but we say the rope IS NOT and the snake IS.

Therefore, it is not just a case of the snake lending its *dharmas* to the rope, but the "existance" in the rope is also temporarily loaned to the snake. Where there is no rope, superimposition of the snake cannot be. Hence the rope lends its "existance" to the snake, and the snake lends its "*dharmas*" to the rope. When we put the two of them together we say, "this is a snake". This experience of the "existence" of the snake is the cause of sorrow.

Again if there be any superimposition, it will always be complete: a half-snake-half-rope-vision or a half-ghost-half-post-vision is not possible. Either it is fully a ghost or it is fully a post. Therefore, when we have even a glimpse our real nature

as the Self, the superimposition caused by ignorance ends completely.

But, when the mind is predominantly *Rajasic* and *Tamasic*, it will create superimpositions and will make a fool of the individual; for he will then start seeing things which are not there. Such a fool is naturally subjected to the sorrows of *Samsar*. They are birth, growth, disease, decay and death. Nobody can escape them. He who has been deluded by his own superimposition will have to undergo these sorrows of *Samsar*.

The Self as the Pure Spirit has no *Samsar*. But when It becomes a victim of superimposition, *Adhyasa*, It identifies with the body and the senses and consequently, the sensations arising out of them such as pleasure or pain, heat or cold, success or failure etc., become powerful shackles on It. The destinies of Matter become the tragic experiences of the Spirit, not because they are in the Spirit, but because the Self unnecessarily makes an unhealthy contact through its own identification with the realm of Matter.

> *** The *Purusha*, seated in *Prakriti*, experiences the qualities born of *Prakriti*, attachment to the qualities born of *Prakriti*, is the cause for his birth in good or evil wombs.**

When the Spirit, Eternally joyous and Infinitely all-full identifies Itself with Matter, It becomes the *Purusha* or the *Jeeva*, the Ego. Then the Spirit, as the "knower" suffers its own delusory *Samsara*, because having entered the field of matter in pre-occupation with the world-of-objects, and in its clinging attachment to the field of Matter, it looks as *though* it has forgotten its own Divine Nature.

He then experiences not only the joys and sorrows in life but also develops a blind attachment to them and this is "the

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* पुरुषः प्रकृतिस्थो हि भुङ्क्ते प्रकृतिजान्गुणान् ।
कारणं गुणसङ्गोऽस्य सदसद्योनिजन्मसु ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIII-22)

cause for its birth in good or evil wombs". "As is its desire, so is its will" is the scriptural declaration of an eternal truth. While living in the world, the experiencer (*Jeeva*) experiences the pleasures and joys interpreted by the world-of-matter (the body, mind and intellect) and gets attached to them and thereby develops residual impressions (*Vasanas*) and takes to conducive fields wherein it can eke out its cherished satisfaction through the vivid experiences.

9

Life Without Embodiment

Many are the thinkers who have been tantalized by the horrid and tearful incident in life, called death. Even today, death is a fascinating idea with all writers and thinkers, authors and philosophers. But often we find that even men of the required calibre rarely come to solve this serious problem. It is only the *Rishis* of old, who in their quietitude had prepared their instruments of understanding and feeling to the required efficiency to soar into the sublime Realms of the Beyond, that really succeeded in observing cooly, in analysing scientifically and in concluding truly the what, how and why of this phenomenon called death.

Even among the thinkers of India we do meet with opposing conclusions and self-contradictory arguments regarding this common but strange happening, death. As *Nachikethas* says in the *Kathopanishad,* there are some schools and thought that have established that death is the end of all and *there is nothing* beyond it. There are yet others who accept, argue and establish that there is existence even beyond the grave.

This question whether there is existence after death or not is not one which belongs to the realms of the Mind and the Intellect.

These instruments of feeling and knowing, can at their best, give us only some vague directions pointing towards a World of Knowledge that actually lies spread out beyond their own frontiers. In order to travel towards that land of Pure Knowledge, the ordinary mortal, however intellectual and sensitive he may be, has not the necessary vehicle. It is only the great Masters of renunciation and wisdom who specially developed their intuitive faculty that can, at will, take one into the Realms Beyond.

In short, such transcendental questions cannot be explained by words and established through any of the ordinarily known "proofs of knowledge" such as Direct-perception, Comparision, Inference, etc. The only way to solve them is through the *Agamas,* which are the words of wisdom given out by men of greater realization, the Saints and Sages.

Hence, the justification for *Nachikethas* to put this question to Lord Death, the king of all *Dharmas* (*Dharma* Raja).

> * **There is the doubt that when a man is dead, some say he is, and some say he is not, this I would like to know, taught by thee. This is the third of the boons I ask.**

It is the *Nihilists* of the *Buddhistic* order, and the Materialists (*Charvakas*) that mainly come to the conclusion that the end is a "Nothing". To the Materialists, this body is all that is, and life is a manifestation that is incidental to the occasion when the limbs and the sense organs are assembled together to form the body. To them the warmth of pulsating life is not a Divine Power presiding over the destiny of the body, but it is a by-product, just as when betel-leaves, lime and nut are chewed together, a third entity called the "red colour" becomes the by-product which, in fact, is not a quality in any one of the three things noticed when chewed separately. Similarly, they claim that when the parts of the body

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* येयं प्रेते विचिकित्सा मनुष्येऽ
स्तीत्येके नायमस्तीतिचैके ।
एतद्विद्यामनुशिष्टस्त्वयाऽहं
वरणामेष वरस्तृतीयः ॥

(Kat. Up., Ch. I., Sec. I–20)

are assembled together by *Prakriti*, life manifests.

To such a team of believers death is the disappearance of the body, and so of the life into nothing. " Out of nothing the life comes, plays out its uncertain games for a time, and into nothing back again it disappears". This philosophy is but a hollow one to any thinking individual, for, out of *nothing* a thing cannot come, nor can a thing disappear indeed to become *nothing*.

On examining closely the arguments of the *Nihilists*, we can very easily find that their stand is self-contradicting. They argue to establish that the Ultimate Truth is *Non-Existence*. According to them, then, Non-Existence existed, and that is certainly a statement of self-contradiction. If we are to accept the entire arguments raised by the *Nihilists*, we have to conclude that they have positively known the state of *Non-Existence;* that is, they have a knowledge of this negative state called Non-Existence. To the *Vedantins* the Knower of Knowledge that knows the Non-Existence is the Supreme Truth, and " the Knower knows no decay, disease or death ", says the *sruti*.

In Hinduism it has always been emphasised that there is a continuity of existence after death and an individual continues his life in a new embodiment under a new set of environments. The individuality which thus undergoes experiences of birth and death repeatedly, is called the *Jeeva* or the embodied-Self. This *Jeeva* is the Eternal Light of Consciousness playing upon and SEEMINGLY conditioned by the subtle body, constituted of the mind-intellect equipments. In the following stanza in the *Geeta* Krishna declares in unequivocal terms that the embodied Self in everyone is set on a great pilgrimage in which It comes to identify Itself with varied forms, temporarily to gain a limited but determined set of experiences.

> *** It is not that at any time (in the past) indeed, was**
> **I not, or were you not, or were not these rulers of men,**
> **Nor verily shall we all ever cease to be hereafter.**

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* न त्वेवाहं जातु नासं न त्वं नेमे जनाधिपाः।
न चैव न भविष्यामः सर्वे वयमतः परम्॥ (Ge. Ch. II–12)

Krishna says that neither He Himself nor Arjuna nor any of the great kings of the age who had assembled in both the armies, was a mere accidental happening. They did not come from nowhere and, at their death, did not become mere non-existent nothingness. Correct philosophical thinking guides a man's intellect to the apprehension of a continuity from the past—through the present—to the endless future. The Spirit remaining the same, It gets seemingly conditioned by different body-equipments and comes to live through its self-ordained environments.

It is this conclusion of the Hindu philosophers that has given to the world the most satisfactory THEORY OF REINCARNATION. There was no great thinker in the past who had not, nor any in the present who has not accepted, expressly or tacitly, the logical conclusions about the DOCTRINE OF REINCARNATION. Buddha constantly made references to his previous births. Virgil and Ovid regarded the doctrine as perfectly self-evident. Josephus observed that the belief in reincarnation was widely accepted among the Jews of his age. Solomon's " Book of Wisdom " says: " To be born in sound body with sound limbs is the reward of the virtues of the past lives. "

Again who does not remember the famous saying of the learned son of Islam, Jalaludin Rumi, who declared, " I died out of the stone and I became a plant; I died out of the plant and became an animal; I died out of the animal and became a man. Why then should I fear to die ? When did I grow less by dying ? I shall die out of the man and shall become an angel !! "

In later times this most intelligent philosophical statement was accepted as a doctrine by the German philosophers Goethe, Fichte, Schelling and Lessing. Among the recent philosophers, Hume, Spencer, Max Mueller have all recognized this doctrine as incontrovertible. Among the poets of the West also, we find many burnished intellects, soaring into the cloudless sky of imagination, and within their poetic flights they too have intuitively felt the sanction behind this immortal doctrine—Browning, Rossetti, Tennyson and Wordsworth, to mention but a few names.

The REINCARNATION THEORY is not a mere dream of

the philosophers, and the day is not far off when with the fast developing science of psychology, the West will come to rewrite its scriptures under the sheer weight of observed phenomena. An uncompromising intellectual quest for understanding life cannot satisfy itself, if it is thwarted at every corner by "observed irregularities". We cannot for long ignore them all as mere "chances". The prodigy Mozart is a spectacular instance which cannot be thus explained away. This genius wrote Sonnets at the age of four, played in public at the age of five and composed his first Opera at the age of Seven! Without the REINCARNATION THEORY we will have to label this wondrous incident as an accident and throw it into the dust-bin of chance and bury it there. To be logical we must accept the idea of the continuity of the embodied souls.

How this continuity of the embodied soul is maintained, is explained in this stanza from the *Geeta*.

> *** Just as in this body the embodied (Soul) passes through childhood, youth and old age, so also, he passes into another body; the learned man does not grieve at it.**

In old age all of us can remember the main incidents of our own childhood and youth. In the progress of growth childhood dies away and youth appears, and youth dies before old age can assert itself. In the old man it is self-evident that neither his childhood nor his youth is with him, and yet, he can remember his own early days. Applying this principle of memory, it becomes quite clear then, that "SOMETHING" in us is common in all the different stages of our growth, so that the same entity remembers the experiences gained by it in the past through the childhood body, and later through the youthful structure also.

Using this subjective experience of everyone in the world as a standard of comparison, Krishna is trying to bring home the

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* देहिनोऽस्मिन्यथा देहे कौमारं यौवनं जरा।
तथा देहान्तरप्राप्तिर्धीरस्तत्र न मुह्यति॥

(Ge. Ch. II—13)

point that wise men do not worry when they leave one body for the purpose of taking another body.

This stanza is again asserting in unequivocal terms the truth behind the Reincarnation Theory. Thus viewed, death can no more be a threat to a wise man. We do not moan at the death of childhood, following which alone can we come to experience youth; we are confident in our knowledge that though youth is entered into and childhood has ended, there is a continuity of existence of the same entity; so, a child has now become the youth; so too, at the moment of death, there is no extinction of the individuality, but the embodied-ego of the dead-body leaves its previous structure; and accordng to the *Vasanas* (mental impressions) that it has gathered during its embodiment, it gets identified with another physical equipment, where it can express itself completely and seek its further fulfilment.

Just as an individual changes his clothes to suit the convenience of the occasion, so too the ego-centre discards one physical form and takes to another, which will be most suited for it to gain the next required type of experiences. No one will go to his office in his night-gown, nor will he in his stiff-collar feel happy while playing tennis in the evening. He changes his dress according to the field where he is intending to work for the time being. Similar is the why and wherefore of death and thereafter. With this striking example, the *Geeta* explains to us how and why the ego-centric entity in an individual readily leaves its associations with one set of equipments, and arrogates to itself another conducive envelopment for living a new set of its required experiences.

> *** Just as a man casts off his worn out clothes and puts on new ones, so also the emobdied-self casts off its worn out body and enters into another which is new.**

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* वासांसि जीर्णानि यथा विहाय
नवानि गृह्णाति नरोऽपराणि ।
तथा शरीराणि विहाय जीर्णानि
अन्यानि संयाति नवानि देही ॥

(Ge. Ch. II-22)

Changing clothes that have become worn out cannot be a pain to any one of us, especially when it is for the purpose of putting on a new set of clothes. Similarly, when the mind-intellect finds that its embodiment in a given form can no longer help it to earn from its available environments experiences that would facilitate its evolutionary pilgrimage, it feels that this particular form is worn out (*Jeerna*). This "worn-out" condition of the body is to be decided netither by its age nor by its biological condition; nor can anybody other than its wearer, the ego, decide it.

Critics rise up in host however, against the truth of this idea and their main platform of arguments is built upon the observed facts of young people dying away in the bloom of their life. In the observer's opinion the individual was young and his body was not worn out (*Jeerna*), but it should be noted that from the standpoint of the evolutionary necessity of the ego concerned, the body was already useless for it. A rich man might feel like changing his house or vehicle almost every year, and he invariably finds ready purchasers also. As far as the rich owner is concerned, the thing has become useless for him, while for the purchaser it is "as good as new". Similarly here, nobody else can decide whether a given body is worn out or not except its "wearer".

In short, the stanza emphasises the Doctrine of Reincarnation which has already been explained in an earlier stanza. Evolution and change are all for the mind-and-intellect and not for the Self. The Self is ever perfect and changeless, and needs no evolution. Therefore, what is it that goes from body to body is being clearly explained in the following stanza from the *Geeta* :

> * **When the Lord takes up a body and when He leaves it, He takes these and goes (with them), as the wind takes the scents from their seats (the flowers).**

When the Lord acquires a body, meaning, when the Infinite

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* शरीरं यदवाप्नोति यच्चाप्युत्क्रामतीश्वरः ।
गृहीत्वैतानि संयाति वायुर्गन्धानिवाशयात् ॥

(Ge. Ch. XV-8)

deludes Itself that it is conditioned by the mind-intellect, it becomes the *Jeeva* ; and the *Jeeva* takes to itself various bodies from time to time and incarnates in different environments, which are ordered by its own burning desires and aspirations, and which are most suited for exhausting and fulfilling its demands. From the moment the *Jeeva* enters a body till it leaves it, it keeps these faculties and mental impressions at all times with itself. In fact the "Subtle-body" includes all these faculties.

At death the "subtle-body" permanently departs from the "gross-body" which is left inert. The dead-body though found to maintain the shape of the very individual, has no more any sense faculty or mental capacity or intellectual ability, that it had expressed before. These expressions, physical, mental and intellectual, were those which gave the body an individual personality-stature. All these constitute the "subtle-body"; the "gross-body" bereft of its subtle essence, is called the "dead body".

At the time of death, the "subtle-body", as it is described here, moves off gathering into itself all faculties, "EVEN AS THE WIND TAKES SCENTS FROM THEIR RESTING PLACES". A passing breeze is not at any time separate from atmospheric air that is everywhere, and yet, when the breeze passes over a flower, or some sandal paste or a scent-bottle (seats of fragrance) it carries with it the respective aroma. Similarly the Subtle-body, when it moves out, carries along with it the senses, the mind and the intellect, not in any gross-form, but as a mere "fragrance" of all that they had lived through, felt in, and thought of. Thus viewed, the mind is nothing but a bundle of *Vasanas.* These *Vasanas* can exist only in the Infinite Consciousness; and the Light of Awareness illumining the *Vasanas* is called the "individual personality"—*Jeeva.*

In this stanza the *Jeeva* is called the Lord (*Iswara*) only because the "individual personality" is the Lord of the body that orders, commands and regulates all its actions, feelings and thoughts. Just as an officer, on receiving his transfer orders from the Government, packs up his belongings and moves out of his residence for the time being, and having reached the new seat of appointment, unpacks and spreads out his furniture for

his comforts; so too, at the time of departing from the body, the "subtle-body" gathers itself from the gross 'dwelling place" and on reaching the new physical structure, it spreads itself out again to use its faculties through the "new-house-of-experience".

When the subtle body finds that it has no more experiences to gather, with a given physical form living in its set of circumstances, that subtle form throws away the physical form and departs. With reference to the body, this condition, after its divorce from the subtle-body, is called the death of the body. But the ego-centre, though not manifest and functioning through the body, exists in its subtle form. This subtle-ego-centre set in the subtle-body is conveyed to its next field of activity (*Loka*) by the energy called *Udana*. *Udana*, which is one of the five *Upa-pranas*, is that energy that supplies the motive power for the ego-centre with its subtle body to move out from one physical structure to another at the time of death.

Thus the *Prasnopanishad* says:

> * **The external fire indeed is *Udana*. Therefore he in whom the flames are gone out, enters another body with the sense absorbed in the mind.**

At the time of death it has been universally observed that the dying man slowly and steadily loses all his sense-activities and capacities. He no more sees, hears, smells, tastes or feels. This is not because these instruments of cognition have become defective but because the power or strength of perception, meaning the *Pranic* Vitality in the sense-organ centres is withdrawn. We have already learnt that the chief *Prana*, the "shadow" of the *Atman*, the ego-centre, has itself appointed different *Upa-pranas* to execute respective duties in the different centres of the body.

When the ego-centre with the subtle-body is preparing to quit the physical body, he gathers all his different assistants before

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* तेजो ह वा उदानस्तस्मादुपशान्ततेजाः ।
पुनर्भवमिन्द्रियैर्मनसि संपद्यमानैः ॥

(Pr. Up., Q.III–9)

he makes the exit. When the visitor has gathered his coat, gloves, hat and umbrella, it is sure that he will soon be going out through the front door. Here the *Upanishad* is explaining that the sense organs, meaning the sense-capacities, are withdrawn unto itself by the mind before the *Udana* lifts it from the dying body and guides it along to the next field of activity.

The description of the *Udana* as the external " fire ", apart from the above-mentioned philosophical significance, has a plain and obvious truth in it,, which provides a complete similarity between the two, So long as the *Udana* exists in the human form the man is alive, and so long as the man is alive, there is warmth in the body. When the *Udana* leaves, the heat also goes away; a dead body is cold to the touch. Thus, we can say that a dead body is a thing from which the flames of life has moved out or the fire has gone off.

The ego-centre, after the death of the body, remains intact in the form of " an idea " until it comes again to fix the relationship with another form. That which helps the " floating-ego " to choose its next rendezvous is the sum-total of the reapings it has to make with the " new-form " in the new field of things and circumstances. Indeed, there is no philosophical concept so tight in logic and so true in reason as the " Law of *Karma* " which is a special blessing understood only by the Hindu community. Unfortunately, as a result of our criminal neglect of the study of our own scriptures, if we have come to read in the " Law of *Karma* " only a repetition of the sapless philosophy of the " Law of Destiny ", it is indeed not the fault of the *Upanishad* Seers. If properly understood, " Law of *Karma* " gives into our individual hands the privilage and the power to carve out our destinies to be lived by us in the days to come.

According to the quality of the actions performed in the past, we shall have a future existence in a form and in a set of circumstances necessary to reap the required quality of reactions in the form of experiences. The future lives are dependent not only upon the actions committed in the past, but also upon the degree of Knowledge of the Reality we have gained in and through our living their reactions. Hence this statement in the *sloka*

from *Kathopanishad.*

> * Some souls enter the womb to have a body and others become plants, according to their work and according to their knowledge.

This stanza indicates the inevitable Philosophy of Rebirth which is the very backbone of the Hindu faith. This ought to be the sane conclusion arrived at by every honest thinker, if he were to analyse the wherefrom and the wherefore of life. Had it not been for the *Karma* done in the past, there would not have been so much difference among those who are living now. A boy born to a Syphilis patient has to suffer from his very birth the sorrow of this despicable disease! At the same time elsewhere, in a palace a child is born to wear the crown and to enjoy the kingdom! Why?

The stanza under review hints at the sublime truth, that our present existence is not a mere accidental happening but a measured link, shaped out by ourselves, which makes the chain of life complete, connecting the dead past through the present to the unborn future. These words indicate not only that there were many incarnations taken by the "ego" in the past, but also that it will again continue manifesting itself in numberless incarnations in the future too. In short, the present life in this form upon the earth is but an incident in the Eternal Existence of the Soul.

Generations after generations come upon the surface of the earth, feed themselves, grow to maturity, breed their kind and die away yielding their place to the new crowd of the latest generation! It is often claimed with unwarranted optimism, that a being having been once born into the human form, will not, whatever be the atrocities he might commit during his life time,

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* योनिमन्ये प्रपद्यन्ते
शरीरत्वाय देहिनः ।
स्थाणुमन्येऽनुसंयान्ति
यथाकर्म यथाश्रुतम् ॥

(Kat. Up., Ch.II, Sec.V-7)

go down so much in the ladder of evolution as to reach the bottom-most level of mere stones ! This false optimism is smothered here by the opening statement of the *Upanishad* in this *Mantra*.

The cardinal philosophical idea in *Vedanta* is that an individualized ego continues identifying with a given physical body only so long as it needs that particular instrument for eking out its desired quota of experiences. Once it is over, it " kicks the bucket ", as it were, and walks off forgetting all its responsibilities, its relationships and its vanities in that particular existence. At this moment of divorce from a given body, it is logical to believe that its thoughts would be about the most predominent desire or aspiration in it—either gathered in its past embodiments, or acquired in its present life.

This last powerful will, determined by the last thought, decides its destiny in the future. An ego that lives all its life in its ego-centric vanities, identifying itself with merely the flesh and ever catering to its appetites, will be hoarding such sensuous *Vasanas* that it must necessarily take a form, lower in the evolutionary scale, in order that its acquired animal instincts may thereby be fulfilled to the maximum.

On the other hand, when an individual, in his discrimination comes to recognize the futility of a lascivious life and therefore aspires to release himself from the thraldom of the flesh, surely moves higher up the ladder of evolution, when he retires, from the present embodiment. Faithfully following this theory, which is at once logical and reasonable, the Science of Life as enunciated in *Vedanta*, declares that the last thoughts of a dying man order his future embodiments and their environments.

Declaring this well-thought-out conclusion of the *Rishis*, the dedicated thinkers of India, the Lord says in the *Geeta* :

> * **Whosoever at the end leaves the body thinking of any being, to that being only he goes, O Kauntheya (O son of Kunti), because of his constant thought of that being.**

"As you think, so you become" is a theory which is obvious to every intelligent man even without an explanation from any philosopher. Thoughts guide all actions, and at any given moment the run of thoughts in an individual is governed and ordered by the channel of thinking, which he himself has ploughed in his bosom with his deliberate and wilful thoughts and actions in the past. Naturally, at the moment of death, instinctively the thoughts would run through its habitual channels, and the flight of thoughts at that moment would determine the direction of the ego's pilgrimage.

Thus the *Prasnopanishad* says:

> ** Whatever be his thoughts, accordingly he attains *Prana* and the *Prana*, united with the *Udana*, together with *Jeevatman*, is led on to the world thought of.

The ego-centre thus propelled by *Udana* is the *Jeevatma* which is led to its next field of activity according to its own willing and desiring, determined and declared by itself, with its last thoughts.

The new world to which the ego-centre is directed need not necessarily mean that there are different worlds in the sense in which we understand the world. In Sanskrit, the word "*Loka*" in its etymological content means only a field of experiencing, and as such, the ego-centre is free to chalk out its own field of experiences, either in the world of animals, or in the world of the flora, or in the world of super-sensuous enjoyment as heaven etc. Summing up the various possibilities thus, the *Rishi* of the *Prasnopanishad* says.

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* यं यं वापि स्मरन्भावं त्यजत्यन्ते कलेवरम् ।
तं तमेवैति कौन्तेय सदा तद्भावभावितः ॥

(Ge. Ch. VIII-6)

** यच्चित्तस्तेनैष प्राणमायाति प्राणस्तेजसा युक्तः ।
सहात्मना यथासंकल्पितं लोकं नयति ॥

(Pr. Up., Q. III

> *** Again, through one special " nerve ", *Udana* ascending, leads us upward to the virtuous world by good work, or pushes us to lower world by sinful acts, or takes us to the world of men, when sin and virtue are mixed.**

At the time of death, as a perfect resultant of all the different kinds, of thoughts and motives that we have been entertaining during the past, our mind thinks of a fit world and it being nothing but a flock of swift-winged thoughts, reaches that arena. The motive force by which the thought thus reaches its objects-of-thinking is provided by the *Udana*-power in us.

It cannot be an exaggeration, if we understand it properly, to say that *Udana* is the " cultural resultant " gained during our mental life. If our thoughts all through our life were low and gross, propelled by animal instincts, selfish wishes and low motives, certainly, the result would be a pull on the mind to move towards an animal life. The *Sastra* says that it is the *Udana* that will lead us then to the lower realms of the animal life desired by us. If on the other hand, our thoughts were higher and nobler, then the consequent greatness of culture in us would be, as it were, pulling us towards higher planes of greater evolutionary status and existence.

Here it is said that the *Udana* lifts the ego-centre wrapped up in the subtle-body to the higher worlds of greater happiness or pulls it down to the lower worlds of graver sorrow, according to the balance sheet declared by the mind-and-intellect at the time of its quitting its present physical body. When the tendencies are almost equal, the individual is given another lease to live in the world again as a human being to make or mar himself.

With this concept in view the entire possibilities of human actions have been divided mainly into two groups, the good and

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* अथैकयोर्ध्व उदानः पुण्येन पुण्यं लोकं नयति।
पापेन पापमुभाभ्यामेव मनुष्यलोकम्॥

(Pr. Up., Q. III-7)

the bad. The good are such thoughts by entertaining which, the individual evolves, while the bad thoughts are such that because of their intentions they gravitate, as it were, to pull the entity towards devolutions. We are now going to discuss the routes in which evolutionary pilgrimages can be undertaken by the subtle bodies of the individuals, who performed self evolving actions and therefore, were essentially good.

Here the *Brahmana* from the *Prasnopanishad* is indicating what exactly would be the direction of this flight :

> *** The year is indeed *Prajapati's* (Sun) movement and in this there are two paths : the "Southern" and the "Northern". Those who follow the "path of *Karma*" alone, by the performance of sacrificial and pious acts, obtain only the "world of the Moon", and certainly they are born again. Therefore, those sages who desire offspring take the Southern route. This "Matter" (*Rayi*) is varily the "Path of the Fore-fathers".**

Vedanta, being so scientific, has again systematically divided all possible good actions which can definitely contribute to the evolution in man, into two groups : *Ishtam* and *Poortham.* *Ishtam* comprises of such acts which have been sanctioned by the scriptural text-books (*Sruti*), and *Poortham* are all those noble acts of kindness and charity sanctioned by the other subsidiary text-books of *Dharma* (*Smriti*).

Ishtam includes all *Vedic* rituals, self-control, truthfulness, the study of *Veda,* disseminating the *Vedic* knowledge to deserving aspirants, serving the unexpected guests and tending continuously the sacred fire in the house. *Poortham* includes

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* संवत्सरो वै प्रजापतिस्तस्यायने दक्षिणं चोत्तरं च।
तद्यो ह वै तदिष्टापूर्ते कृतमित्युपासते।
ते चान्द्रमसमेव लोकमभिजयन्ते त एव पुनरावर्तन्ते,
तस्मादेत ऋषयः प्रजाकामा दक्षिणं प्रतिपद्यन्ते।
एष ह वै रयिर्यः पितृयाणः॥

(Pr. Up., Q. I-9)

constructing village-tanks, public wells, bathing-ghats, maintenance, reconstruction or construction of temples, poor-feeding and opening of new roads, parks, *Dharma-Shaalaas,* water-sheds, etc.

If you analyse this classification and understand them from the level of the mental condition of the devotees, you will certainly understand how and why they follow two different paths in their evolutionary progress.

Those who perform *Ishtam* are necessarily men of high culture and discriminating capacities, with a great amount of aversion to the sensuous desires. They are mainly men of meditation, demanding out of life nothing more than a greater mental and intellectual perfection, and they steer their boats of life towards the pole star of the Eternal Truth. Naturally, when they depart from here, their minds, all the time meditating upon the "energy aspect" of life, identify themselves with the "Sun Path" and reach the Sun—*Prana* or Energy and cross it to go beyond.

While on the other hand, those who perform *Poortham* are no doubt cultured and pure members of the society, but they are to a large extent, victims of their own deep desires for wealth, for children or for glory and position in life. In order to fulfil their own desires, they try to fulfil the small desires of a large number of people through *Poortham* and thereby they expect that they would be blessed by those satisfied members of the society and that ultimately they will also get their own desires fulfilled.

Thus, though they live all through their life-time a noble life of charity, purity, benevolence, etc., there was always in them an undercurrent of desire gurgling deep within their apparently noble hearts. Their demand was mainly for the acquisition of more and more "Matter". Naturally when they depart from here, they go to the world of "Matter" the Moon. Thus following the Southern route, they reach the Moon, crossing which they go to the plane of Consciousness technically called the *Pitruloka,* the world of the Manes. There they enjoy super-sensuous objects with super-sensitive apparatus, leading a life of super-sensuous joys of material possessions and glories.

Therefore the *Upanishad* says that one should be a colossal fool to claim that these alone constitute the supreme act of Divinity and that there is nothing superior to it. This statement of the scriptures is because, the meritorious acts of both the categories in their reactions only provide for a subtler field of experiences, called the "Heavens". One who has thus gained the "Heavens" as a result of the meritorious acts performed by him will one day or other, on exhausting the merit balance against him, have to return to the lower planes of consciousness, where pain and struggle, failures and successes, appointments and disappointments, loss and gain, death and birth etc., will again be his experience.

Therefore the *Upanishad Rishi* says:

> * **Engrossed in the ways of the ignorant, these people boyishly think that they have gained the end of life. But being subject to passions and attachment, they never attain *Knowledge*, and therefore, they fall down wretched, when the fruits of their good deeds are exhausted.**

We must not forget at the same time that this *Sruti* belongs to the *Veda*, and the *Vedas* being eternal Knowledge [illegible] suffer any contradiction. In the earlier part of the *Veda* [illegible] the *Karma Kaanda*, there is a sincere advocacy of the [illegible] of the *Karmas*; later on in the *Upanishadic* portion [illegible] stanzas like these a vehement condemnation of the [illegible] would look as though it is a palpable contradiction [illegible]

When your son is in an elementary class [illegible] that the child should daily read and learn by [illegible] cation tables. But, when he comes to the [illegible] Mathematics, it would be absurd if you [illegible] yet read and learn everyday the [illegible] ing his post-graduate studies! [illegible]

* अविद्यायां बहुधा वर्तमाना वयं [illegible]
यत् कर्मिणो न प्रवेदयन्ति रागात् [illegible]

mentary purpose, without which nothing higher is possible. But continue wasting the entire life in mere ritualism, would be terrible wastage, and hence, *Sruti* is crying down such waste-ful policies in spiritual *Saadhakas*.

We have already seen that how desires get only multiplied as each desire gets fulfilled, unless the source of eruption of desires is dried up or choked. It is desire, as we have seen, that generates the flow of thoughts in the mind, and it is again the qulity, texture quantity and the direction in which the thoughts flow, that determine the actions. Thus, the *Karma* cannot end where desires have no have ended. Thoughts cannot end where the mind mu ceased. Where the thoughts are bubbling, there the mind must be gross with its dense power. Therefore, annihilation of the mind (*manonaasham*) is possible only when desires are annihilated. This amounts to saying that these men, wise, energetic, devoted and sincere, when in them, ritualism has fulfilled itself, pursue this wrong path of wasteful activity only because of the germs of desires that still breed in their hearts.

Thus the *Upanishad Rishi* continues :

*** These ignorant men who regard sacrificial and charitable acts as most important, do not know any other way to Bliss. Having enjoyed in the heights of heaven, the abode of pleasures, they again enter into this or even into inferior worlds.**

Never was the world without this bitter controversy betwe the two principles of life, namely laborious extrovert action peaceful introvert seeking. *Karma* and *Jnana* have ever at a tug-of-war, unbroken at all times. This endless contro itself, we may say, was the main motive-force, which *Hinduism* such a perfect and exact science of spiritualism the history of the world we find the periods of *Karma* y place to periods of *Jnana* which in their turn, giving

* इष्टापूर्तं मन्यमाना वरिष्ठं नान्यच्छ्रेयो वेदयन्ते प्रमूढाः ।
नाकस्य पृष्ठे ते सुकृतेऽनुभूत्वेमं लोकं हीनतरं वा विशन्ति ॥
(Mu. Up., Ch. I. S

Karma again after a period of retirement and renunciation.

Meritorious acts are divided into two groups by our ancient *Rishis* on the basis of the Religious text-books. Those noble acts of spiritual merit, as we have already seen, advocated in the *Srutis* called *Istham*, constituted the *Yagnas* and *Yagas* ; and those prescribed in the *Smritis* constituted acts such as digging of a well, the laying of a road, building a *Dharmasala*, feeding the poor, tending the sick, helping education, etc., are called *Poortham*.

Here *Mother Sruti* refuses to define the Heaven obtained by doing these two types of meritorious acts as positive place of happiness, but only says that it is a plane of existence where the soul-killing sorrows of life are not present. Thus by choosing the word *Naakasya*, *na + akam = nakaama*, meaning that state where pain is unknown, she wants us to understand that, though in Heaven there are none of the pains of mortal life, it is only a relative happiness there. The denizens in Heaven, including the *Vaikunta Narayana*, are only creatures in pain, when their state is compared with the Absolute State of Perfection, which is the theme of the *Upanishads*.

In this *Mantra* we have a positive declaration against the optimistic view held by some of our pundits, including some of the most sympathetic *Gurus*. According to them, the ego having once got the form of man, can never go down to any lower plane of existence, whatever be his actions in life. This idea is being blasted into smithereens in this *Mantra*. It is also note-worthy here, to observe that a man as-a-result of his vicious deliberate criminality, can go down on the ladder of evolution to the existence of even a miserable worm in a dust bin! In this particular *Mantra*, it is said that, having enjoyed the fruits of all meritorious acts, the ego-centre may enter again "this world or even a lower one". On the other hand, to those rare few, who have gained the required spirit of renunciation and have retired into the life of meditation in solitude, depending for their existence only upon any help reaching them in unexpected chances, *Sruti* promises perfect evolutionary success.

> * **But those who perform *Tapas* and *Sraddha* in forests, having control over their senses, learned and living the life of mendicants, go, through the orb of the sun, their good and bad deeds being consumed, where the immortal and undecaying *Purusha* is.**

Suryadwarena (through the Path of the Sun) : The routes taken by the subtle body after its death, are of two kinds as already explained, (a) the *Moon-path* and (b) the *Sun-path*. The *Sun-path* is called the *Uttarayana* and the *Moon-path*, the *Dakshinayana.*

It is a theory of *Vedanta* that those who merely perform *Karmas,* on departing from here, take to the " Southern path " to live in the *Pitruloka ;* and after enjoying there for a period, they come back. Those who, not only perform the *Yagnas* and *Yagaas,* but along with them, also meditate upon the great Truth of our Philosophy (*i.e.,* those who perform *Karma* and *Upasana*), at death, leave the body and take the " Northern route " and, through the corridors of the Sun, go beyond and enter the *Barhmaloka,* the Supreme world of the Creator. It is the belief that they along with the Creator, at the end of the *Yuga,* during the *Pralaya,* get merged with the Supreme Absolute Awareness. This method of liberation is technically called " *Krama Mukti* " (gradual liberation). But, as far as a *Jnani* is concerned as in the case of Buddha, Shankara, Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Ramana, Aurobindo etc., there is no going and no coming ; they reach what is called " *Kaivalya Mukti* " (Pure liberation) or *Sadyo Mukti* (immediate liberation).

The theory of gradual liberation (*Krama Mukti*) accepted in *Vedanta,* says that ritualism (*Karma*) accompanied by meditation (*Upasana*) takes the ego to the realm-of-the-Creator (*Brahmaloka*) where, at the end of the *Kalpa* (the cycle of creation and dissolution) it merges with the Supreme. Even in *Brahmaloka* it is necessary that the ego must through self effort live strictly all

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* तपःश्रद्धे ये ह्युपवसन्त्यरण्ये शान्ता विद्वांसो भैक्षचर्यां चरन्तः।
सूर्यद्वारेण विरजाः प्रयान्ति यत्रामृतः स पुरुषो ह्यव्ययात्मा ॥

(Mu. Up., Ch. I, Sec. II–11)

the spiritual directions of the Creator, and through constant contemplation upon the Self, come to deserve the total liberation by ending all its connections with "Ignorance". Those who have not reached the realm-of-the-Creator, may not come to enjoy the Supreme-merger. They will, at the end of the *Kalpa*, have to come back and take their manifestations in embodiments, ordered by the remaining *Vasanas*. Keeping this principle in mind Krishna says in the *Geeta* that rebirth is for everyone, even to those who have attained any high plane up to *Brahmaloka* ; but having once reached *Brahmaloka*, there is no return ; from there the *Jeeva* rises to merge with the Self.

> * Worlds up to the "world-of *Brahmaji*" are subject to rebirth. O Arjuna, but he who reaches Me, O Kaunteya has no birth again.

To those who have awakened themselves to the rediscovery of their Essential Eternal Nature and realized themselves to be the One All-pervading Self—"*After attaining Me*" — thereafter, there is no return to the plane of limited-existence. To the waker there is no re-admission into the realm where he was when he was dreaming ; to awake is to miss for ever the joys and sorrows of that dream which he had dreamt. After attaining the waker-hood (Me) there is no return (rebirth) into the dreamland (*Samsara*).

It is quite interesting to note how, in the history of thought in the *Upanishads*, the goal of life which was considered in the beginning as "the state of deathlessness" (*Amritattwa*), came to be reckoned later on as "the absence of rebirth". In the beginning the anxiety of the seeker was to end the unavoidable and the most horrid of all experiences called "death". As knowledge increased through the right evaluation of the happenings in life, it soon became clear to the subjective research-scholars, the *Rishis*, that death had really no sting at all for those who had understood that it is nothing but one of the different experiences in life. Death can in no way clip off the continuity of existence.

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* आब्रह्मभुवनाल्लोकाः पुनरावर्तिनोऽर्जुन ।
मामुपेत्य तु कौन्तेय पुनर्जन्म न विद्यते ॥

(Ge. Ch. VIII-16)

Those relentless thinkers had in the logic of their thoughts come to the conclusion that birth was the beginning of all pains and therefore, the goal of life, if at all it was possible to achieve, should be "*The state of no more rebirth*".

Therefore, estimating the benefit enjoyed by a Man-of-Perfection, through the realization of the Self, it is said here that "*Having attained Me, the high-souled ones are no more subject to re-birth*".

> * **Having attained Me, the *Mahatmas* (great souls) do not again take birth, which is the house of pain and is non-eternal, they having reached the Highest Perfection, *Moksha*.**

The dream of rebirth and its destinies belongs to the delusory ego, which is nothing but the Self identifying with its delusory matter envelopments. Electricity conditioned by the bulb is the light ; when the bulb gets broken, the light which is an effect, merges with the cause, the current which is the same everywhere. Similarly, the Self conditioned by a given mind and intellect is the ego (*Jeeva*), which suffers the rebirth, the agonies of imperfections, the disease, the decay and the death. Once the mind intellect equipment is transcended, the ego comes to rediscover that it is nothing other than the Self.

He who thus experiences the Self as his own Real Nature, realizes that he never had any relationship at all with the equipments of feeling and understanding. Just as an awakened man has no more any relationship with his dream-wife and children, the ego ends its march through the thorny path of pain and finitude, when it awakens to the spiritual cognition of the Self. Such great souls will no more have any need to manifest in the plane of plurality to be presented with the repeated lashes of sorrow and misery.

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* मामुपेत्य पुनर्जन्म दुःखालयमशाश्वतम् ।
नाप्नुवन्ति महात्मानः संसिद्धिं परमां गताः ॥

(Ge. Ch. VIII–15)

In all other states of existence, there is again and again the experience of return. Just as sleep is not the end of life, but only a refreshing pause between two spans of activity, so too, death is not an end, but often, only a restful pause in the unmanifested existences in different embodiments. It was already indicated that even from higher realms of consciousness, the ego-centres will have to return to exhaust their unmanifested cravings, the *Vasanas*. Birth, we have already been told is "*A house of pain and finitude*", and therefore, complete satisfaction can be reached only when there is no rebirth—no return.

Often educated students ask: "Why, after realizing the Self, should there be no-return?" Therefore, here in the following *Mantra* of the *Mundakopanishad* we have a clear statement explaining the law behind human rebirth.

> * **Whosoever desires for objects, brooding over them, they are born again for the fulfilment of those desires. But in the case of a Seer whose longings have found their final consummation and who has realized the Self, desires vanish even here in this life itself.**

We have already discussed the genesis of action wherein we found that the ignorance of our Real Nature which is all-perfect and All-full, generates in us vague and fantastic desires and makes us feel that it is but a mad attempt on our part to come to our own Real Nature. We found also that desires disturb a hornet's nest of stinging thoughts and that the thoughts expressing themselves in the outer world of sense objects, become the actions of the individual. The individual ego naturally has to seek conducive "field of activities" for the expression of its desire-prompted activities.

Self-realization is the ending of every trace of ignorance in us. In the vital moment of experiencing the Selfhood, the God-man drops for ever his unawareness of his own All-perfect

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* कामान्यः कामयते मन्यमानः स कामभिर जायते तत्र तत्र।
पर्याप्तकामस्य कृतात्मनस्तु इहेव सर्वे प्रविलीयन्ति कामाः॥
(Mu. Up., Ch. III, Sec. II-2)

Nature, and therefore he cannot have thereafter any more desires in him. In the words of the *Sruti* he becomes thereafter a "*Paryaaptakaami*", a term for which it is very difficult to find an equivalent in the English language.

Therefore it is generally misunderstood that desirelessness is that negative state of mental coma, into which a person falls when poisonous fumes rise in the bosom as his disappointed desires putrefy there !! If, it were so, the great Masters of wisdom would not have recommended it as the Supreme State of Perfection.

There is a lot of difference between the disappointed-fox proverbially crying "*the grapes are sour*", and a king rejecting his golden plate of grapes declaring it to be *not really the best !!* Desirelessness and the state of mental poise gained therein by the Master are because of his realization of the Self and the state of Absolute Bliss. After a complete dinner and plenty of dessert a fully satisfied man will certainly cry "no" to any pressing offer of yet another slice of toast. Similarly, a moment of total satisfaction comes in experiencing the perfection of the Self, so that the Master of realization cries "no" to all material sense-objects, not because they do not contain any glitter of joy, but because from his stand point these tiny toys-of-life have no more any joy-contents when they are compared to the Infinite treasure of joy which has already become his. A millionaire would rarely go to a poor-feeding with hopes of getting a sumptous feed—even in his dream.

Thus if the Hindu Philosophers glorify "the state of desirelessness" as the end-all and be-all of life it is becuse they know a technique of making us reach a greater state of perfection, from where, when we look down, the flimsy joys of life would all look ridiculous, stupid and childish. In the perfect knowledge that we have already with us all the happiness that we seek through desire-fulfilment, to be desireless is certainly a much more glorious state of fulfilment and happiness than to strive and struggle eternally to produce and accumulate the objects of changing demands of the mad and uncontrolled desires. Therefore, the great Masters, when they talk of the State of Desirelessness, mean that

state of full and conscious Awareness, in which the individual has no more any regrets at not having things which he should desire for, because with knowledge, all ignorance ends and aslo because, where there is no ignorance, there desires cannot erupt.

In short, according to the texture of our desires, we think, and as we think, we are born into various situations identifying ourselves with various forms—now born and now dying and now reborn again. The seer who has rediscovered himself to be no more the body-mind-intellect entity, leaves off all desires, and therefore, to him there is no more any cause for making his appearance again in the world, for gaining or fulfilling any of his unfulfilled desires ! !

10

Life Within Embodiment

The ignorance of our Real Identity has made us wrongly identify ourselves with the mind, intellect and body delusions; this is the starting point for our ego-centric life of pains and limitations. Therefore, there is no other achievement more sacred and glorious, which a human seeker can achieve within the duration of his existence as man, than the realization of his Real Identity with the Unlimited Eternal Absolute Self.

One identifying with the Self during one's life-time here gains the Eternal status of deathless perfection. For an individual who realizes his Real Nature there cannot be any more of the pains of birth and death. If a man encounters a tiger in his dream, after waking up from the dream, he need not have to run to the side-board to snatch his rifle to shoot down the tiger that haunted him down in his dream ! After a dream-ride when the dreamer wakes up, he need not run out to take his dream horse to water ! After waking up from the dream of the ego-centric agonies into the waking state of the knowledge of the Self, the God-man will not and need not repeat the to-and-fro swinging between the arcs of birth and death.

> * If here (in this life) a person is able to comprehend Him (Self) before the death of his body, he will be fully liberated from the bondage of the world; if he is not able to comprehend Him, then he has to take a body once again in the world of creation.

If an individual fails to realize the Eternal Nature of his Self during his life-time, he, after departing from his present manifestation, will have to take up yet another form and come back to this wretched plane of limitations and finiteness. This is true, because the ego-sense can ultimately end only at the final shifting of our Present identifications with our body, mind and intellect to a real understanding, born of firsthand experience of the True Nature of our Eternal Selfhood, which is the source of all Life in us. As long as the individual has not come to have this subjective experience of the Self, so long his ego-sense persists, so much so, when the "I-ness" and "my-ness" in him drop off from their present physical body, they remain intact together as an "idea-ego" which in time associates itself with another form maintaining and developing its egoness with that chosen form.

The root cause for all these is the ignorance of Reality. The very first modification of spiritual ignorance is the ego-sense in us. Had "I" not been there, there would not have been any sorrow. If "I" am not there, nothing else can be. As long as this "I" exists, everything else exists. This "I" is the very first effect of ignorance, most appropriately called "ne-science".

> ** It is observed that there are other obstacles also which hurl man into a whirl of births and deaths. Their one root is the ego—the first modification of ignorance.

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* इह चेदशकद् बोद्धं
  प्राक् शरीरस्य विस्रस:।
तत: सर्गेषु लोकेषु
  शरीरत्वाय कल्पते॥ (Kat. UP., Ch. II, Sec. VI–4)

** सन्त्यन्ये प्रतिबन्धाः पुंसः संसारहेतवो दृष्टाः।
तेषामेकं मूलं प्रथमविकारो भवत्यहंकारः॥

(VC–298)

Ignorance expressed in the body, mind and intellect is called "I", and this concept of "I" is beginningless.* It started even before the beginning of time. Before one recognizes an object, emotion or thought, there must be already an "I". If there be an object and the "I" is not present, then there cannot be an experience. For every experience the I-factor representing the subject is indispensable. I (the ego, myself) am the subject. So the first object that emerged at the beginning of creation must have been the first thought at zero time. When I arrogated the first thought to myself, the concept of "I" did arise. Thus the ego is beginningless (*anaadi*). This "I-ness" (*Aham-swabhaava*), which is beginningless, is the *Jeeva*, the individuality. All activities on the relative plane are carried out by this *Jeeva*.

> *** It is without beginning; it is of the nature of the ego and is called the *Jeeva*, which carries out the entire range of activities on the relative plane. It performs good and evil actions according to its previous *Vasanas*, and it experiences their results. It comes and goes up and down, taking birth in various bodies. The waking, dream and other states and the experiences of joy and sorrow belong to this knower.**

This *Jeeva* carries out the activities of the world in strict adherence to a blue-print provided by itself. This blue-print, the peculiar mode of one's activities, is determined by the *Vasanas* acquired earlier. The activitity may be good, bad or indifferent, but they are all ordered by the texture of one's own *Vasanas*.

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* अनादिकालोऽयमहंस्वभावो
जीवः समस्तव्यवहारवोढा ।
करोति कर्माण्यपि पूर्ववासनः
पुण्यान्यपुण्यानि च तत्फलानि ॥

(VC–186)

भुङ्क्ते विचित्रास्वपि योनिषु व्रज-
न्नायाति निर्यात्यध ऊर्ध्वमेषः ।
अस्यैव विज्ञानमयस्य जाग्रत्-
स्वप्नाद्यवस्थाः सुखदुःखभोगः ॥

(VC–187)

Thus, when the *Jeeva* acts in the world, ordered by its past *Vasanas*, the activities produce results. These fruits are enjoyed by the *Jeeva* under infinite varieties of physical environments. In order to act as per old *Vasanas*, and to enjoy the fruits of actions, the individual has to take birth in various fields of activities and pass through the three states of waking, dream and deep-sleep. The experiencer of joy and sorrow in these three states of Consciousness is the *Jeeva.*

Whatever be the condition or the state wherein an individual gains an experience, there the concept of "I" is immanent. This vanity of feeling that "I am the doer, I am the enjoyer," that "I am the seer, the hearer and the smeller etc.," and that "I am the feeler and the thinker", is called the individuality, the Ego (*Jeeva*). The perceiver-feeler-thinker entity who arrogates actions to himself by feeling, "I am the doer (*Karta*)" and "I am the enjoyer (*Bhokta*)", is the experiencer of joys and sorrows—the little ego.

This sense of individuality, when it identifies with the three *Gunas—Sattwa, Rajas* and *Tamas*—which are the three modes of the mind, comes to express itself in the three states of consciousness, the waking, dream and deep-sleep. Thus roughly we may say that the ego, conditioned by *Rajas*, is the "dreamer", and conditioned by *Tamas*, is the deep-sleeper. The same ego, according to the condition of the mind, experiences itself as the waker, the dreamer and the deep-sleeper, and in all these states, naturally, it claims to be the "doer" and the "experiencer". Therefore:

> * **Know that it is the ego which (identifying with the body, etc.) becomes the doer or experiencer, and in union with the *Gunas* such as *Sattwa* etc., assumes the three states (of waking, dreaming and deep-sleep).**

The active agent in life's turmoils, who feels the joys of all the successes and the carping sorrows of all the failures, who

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* अहंकारः स विज्ञेयः कर्ता भोक्ताभिमान्ययम् ।
सत्वादिगुणयोगेन चावस्थात्रयमश्नुते ॥

(VC-104)

dances to the tunes sung by circumstances, whether cheerful or melancholy, who flutters here and there as the wind chances to blow in the stormy fields of opposing likes and dislikes, and who swings between the two banks of joy and sorrow, is the ego-centre that helplessly floats along like a pathetic dazed body, bloated up and getting putrefied on the waters of time and circumstances. This ego-centre, a product of our identifications with our body, mind and intellect, is the one who has the delusory arrogance to claim that he is the actor, the perceiver, the enjoyer and the knower. In short, the intelligent " knowing soul ", knows its own delusory extensions as something different from itself, and due to this wrong perception comes to reap its own poisonous harvest of sorrows, limitations, finitude and mortality.

> * **That is he, who sees, feels, hears, smells, tastes, thinks and knows. He is the doer, the intelligent ego, the *Purusha*. He dwells in the highest, indestructible *Atman* (Self).**

And yet this delusory ego has no vitality of its own, as it is nothing but a mere super-imposition upon the *Atman* " the highest indestructible Self ". The Pure Conscious Centre, that is the Spark of Life in man, is a veritable dynamo that lends its energy to the ego to dance its own death-tunes. Just as a ghost has no existence apart from the post, so too the ego-centre has no existence other than the Supreme Self in us.

If there is such a Self in us, apart from what we generally know as the ego-centre, certainly, the teacher should give us some more detailed touches and detailed information about this Self. This Divine Spark of Life, technically called in *Vedanta* as the *Atman* is to be shown to us, though not by directly pointing it out to us, at least by its various manifestations known to us. Therefore, an attempt is made by the great *Rishi* of the *Mandukya Upanishad* to explain to us the *Atman* through its manifestations. Preparing the students for this analysis the *Rishi* says:

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* एष हि द्रष्टा श्रोता घ्राता रसयिता मन्ता बोद्धा कर्ता।
विज्ञानात्मा पुरुषः स परेऽक्षरे आत्मनि संप्रतिष्ठते ॥

(Pr. Up., Q. IV- 9)

* This *Atman* has four quarters (parts).

The term quarter (*padas*) does not [illegible] as the four legs of a cow, if we were to [illegible] ing of the word *pada*. Here the [illegible] activities that the same *Atman* seems to [illegible] expresses through an individual.

On analysing the subjective life of [illegible] three planes of consciousness in which [illegible] the dream and the deep-sleep. In [illegible] ness, we find also that, in each one of [illegible] though we in ourselves are three [illegible] in us is different from the "dreamer" [illegible] in us is yet a third entity different [illegible] selves with, both in our waking [illegible]

There is yet another state of [illegible] state, discovered by the [illegible] *Thuriya State*, otherwise known as [illegible] this State of consciousness we [illegible] planes of consciousness are [illegible] not have any experience of [illegible] we have come to believe [illegible] of this that the Master says [illegible]

The first quarter (*pada*) is [illegible] as "*Vaiswanara*", and [illegible] the waking-state-consciousness [illegible] objects. He is conscious of [illegible] known to him is the [illegible] tastes, smells and touches. [illegible] cannot have any [illegible] fields of the objects [illegible]

** The first [illegible] of activity is the [illegible]

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* सोऽयमात्मा चतुष्पात् ॥

the external world of objects, who has seven limbs and nineteen mouths, and who enjoys the gross objects of the world.

The *Viswa* or the waking-state-ego is described here by the *Upanishadic* seer as having "seven limbs and nineteen mouths". The word "*mouth*" as used here is, in its amplest significance, an instrument of consumption. In this sense we can say ordinarily that we are five mouthed beings enjoying or consuming the world of objects through the five mouths, namely, the five sense-organs, and thereby deriving our quota of enjoyment in our experiences. In the *Mantra* we are told that the waking-state-ego has nineteen mouths, meaning the five organs-of-actions, the five organs-of-perception, the five aspects of our *Prana,* the mind, the intellect, the egoity and the *chitta.*

It is through the organs-of-action and the organs-of-perception driven by the five aspects of *Prana* and the inner instruments of the psychological and the intellectual personalities that we are able to experience the waking-state. If any one of them is missing, our experience of the world will to that degree be incomplete. When fully understood thus, the statement of the *Mantra* becomes full of significance and meaning, almost inimitable in its expressiveness.

In order to express and fulfil its own *Vasana*-prompted desires and thoughts, the *Jeeva* assumes a physical body and acts in the world and gains its quota of experiences. Due to the compelling urgencies of the existing *Vasanas* it becomes completely extrovert in nature, striving and straining through the body, which has its maximum expression in the waking state, to eke out its joys and sorrows from the world of sensuous objects like woman, food, wine etc.

*** The Self, deluded by *Maya,* is he who, identifying with the body, does all actions (all perceptions,**

** जगरितस्थानो वहिष्प्रज्ञः सप्ताङ्ग एकोनविंशतिमुखः
स्थूलभुग्वैश्वानरः प्रथमः पादः ॥

(Ma. Up.–3)

feelings and thoughts). In the "waking-state" it is he (this *Jeeva*) who reaches gratification through the varied objects of enjoyment, such as woman, food, wine, etc.

The *Atman*, forgetting Its own Infinite Blissful Nature, due to Its identification with the *Vasanas*, becomes as though limited and striving through the physical body to contact the world-of-objects, and through sense gratifications It labours hard to gain a sense of utmost satisfaction. This seeker-of-joy, functioning through the body in the wold-of-objects, is the "Waker" in each one of us. When this idea of the waking personality is correctly understood, the questions regarding the waking-state get solved automatically.

** That state of experience wherein the organs of perception such as the ears (and the rest) perceive and gain experience of their respective objects such as sound etc., is the waking state. The Self, identifying Itself with the gross body (in the waking state) is called "*Viswa*".

Life identified with the physical body, seeing through the ignorance of its own Real Nature, perceives a world of sense-objects, and deluded by its own false perceptions, experiences the waking-state. In this state It acts as a definite personality called the *Viswa*.

The same Life Force withdrawing its playful courtings in the external world, identifies Itself with the subtle body and thus creates another distinct personality called the "dreamer" or the *Taijasa*. The *Taijasa* has its own world of experiences in its

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* स एव मायापरिमोहितात्मा शरीरमास्थाय करोति सर्वं।
स्त्रियन्नपानादिविचित्रभोगैः स एव जाग्रत्परितृप्तिमेति॥
(Kai. Up., Part I-12)

** श्रोत्रादिज्ञानेन्द्रियैः शब्दादिविषयैश्च ज्ञायते इति यत्
सा जाग्रदवस्था। स्थूलशरीराभिमानि आत्मा विश्व इत्युच्यते॥
(Tat. Bdh)

dream. Therefore the *Rishi* is giving us in the following stanza an exhaustive narration of the nature of the dreamer, his field of activity and the objects of enjoyment.

> *** The second quarter (*pada*) is *Taijasa* whose sphere of activity is the Dream-state, who is conscious of the internal world of objects, who has seven limbs and nineteen mouths and who enjoys the subtle objects of the mental world.**

The *Viswa* and the *Taijasa*, the ego of the waker and the ego of the dreamer, are both parts of the same spiritual entity in us. Pure Consciousness or Awareness identifying Itself with the gross body acts the part of *Viswa*, and the same Reality conditioned by its own identifications with the subtle body becomes the dreamer and experiences the dream-world as the *Taijasa*.

As regards the term "Nineteen Mouths" we have already discussed it earlier when we discussed the waking-state-ego. Similarly, the dreamer or the *Taijasa* is said here to enjoy the subtle world of objects because he is conscious only of the inner world. Thus, *Taijasa* has for its sphere of activity the world of dreams.

> **** For the question, "what is the Dream-state", the explanation is: the world that is projected from the impressions born out of whatever has been seen or heard in the waking state, while in sleep is called Dream. The Self, *Atman*, identifying Itself with the subtle-body, is called "*Taijasa*".**

In the Waking State there is the experience of the external

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* स्वप्नस्थानोऽन्तः प्रज्ञः सप्ताङ्ग एकोनविंशतिमुखः
प्रविविक्तभुक्तैजसो द्वितीयः पादः ॥ (Ma. Up.–4)

** स्वप्नावस्था केति चेत् जाग्रदवस्थायां यद् दृष्टं यद् श्रुतं
जनितवासनया निद्रासमये य प्रपञ्चः प्रतीयते सा
स्वप्नावस्था । सूक्ष्मशरीराभिमानी आत्मा तैजस इत्युच्यते ॥
(Tat. Bdh)

world of objects as interpreted to us by the "waker" in us, who is completely conscious of the body. As a contrast to the Waking State, the Dream State can be defined as the experience of the ego when it is completely unconscious of the body, but it gazes on to recognize the sense impressions that it has gathered while roaming about in its waking-consciousness. In fact, the dreamer seeing the dream amounts to the mind viewing the mind. This is something like a pet dog fattened in luxury, sitting in the drawing room of its master looking at its own tail wagging; so too the mind curls upon itself and sees at one end of itself the impression chart that it had etched out for itself during its transactions with its sense-organs in the outer world.

While dreaming even though the dream is perfectly real to the dreamer, we all know that the dream world is nothing but a mental creation of the dreamer himself. During the waking-state, while experiencing the world of sense objects, the mind gathers impressions, and during the dream, one part of the dreamer's mind observes the impression-chart in another portion of his own mind! This idea has been brought out in the following *Mantra* where it says, " the mind sees again what has already been seen "; " the mind hears again what has been heard "; and " it enjoys again what has been enjoyed at different times and places "

> * In this state the mind enjoys the dream and its greatness. What has been seen, it sees again; what has been heard, it hears again ; what has been enjoyed in different places and countries, it enjoys again. What has been seen and not seen, heard and not heard, experienced and not experienced, real and unreal, he sees all—he being all, sees all.

In this enunciation the *Sruti* is careful to include and

* अत्रैष देवः स्वप्ने महिमानमनुभवति।
यद्दृष्टं दृष्टमनुपश्यति।
श्रुतं श्रुतमेवार्थमनुशृणोति।
देशदिगन्तरैश्च प्रत्यनुभूतं पुनः पुनः प्रत्यनुभवति।
दृष्टं चादृष्टं च श्रुतं चाश्रुतं चानुभूतं चाननुभूतं च
सच्चासच्च सर्वं पश्यति सर्वः पश्यति॥ (Pr. Up., [illegible]

incorporate into the possibilities of the dream, even such things as "what has not been seen, never been heard, never been experienced" etc.,; even unreal things can also be dreamt by the dreamer during the dream. Having thus given a complete explanation of the dream-experiences in an attempt at the definition of it, the master tries to explain the very nature of the relation between the dreamer and the dreamt in that state of consciousness.

Suppose one is dreaming of a jungle scene where he is experiencing that he is being *pursued* by a hungry and angry-looking tiger. The dreamer must, naturally, run for his life through the thick jungles, among the gigantic trees overladen with clusters of tangled creepers, which allow no direct sunlight to penetrate through them, until at last, ducking behind rocks, and running round boulders, the dreamer slowly reaches the banks of the river into which he jumps and thereby saves himself. Now, let us suppose that the dreamer suddenly wakes up at the touch of the water (in the dream).

Being awakened from the dream, he will at once realize that the water of the river, the boulders and the rocks, the trees and the creepers, the jungle and the tiger, the tiger's growling and his fear, nay, even the very dreamer who was running and the ground on which the was running etc., all were nothing but the creation of his own mind out of itself. His mind as a tiger, threatened his mind which became the " dreamer ", and the same mind assumed the form of the jungle and the river. In short the " waker " realizes that all was nothing but his mind. He, being thus the all, both the dreamer and the dreamt, naturally himself sees himself as the all, even though while dreaming he believed in the full reality of what he had seen.

Even unreal things such as a four-tusked elephant, reddish in colour, with special giant-boots on and, perhaps, with a woollen muffler can visit the dramer in his dream. Thus there is no law that only things seen in the Waking State or things that have a " reality " in the Waking State alone should appear in the dream. In fact we can see even things that have not yet been conceived so far even by the mind of the Creator ! And yet dream is nothing but the mental impressions gathered by the individual in his

Waking State. You may wonder how he can get in his mind the impressions of the red elephant as described above though never experienced in the Waking State. Even this is suggested in this *Upanishadic* statement.

The mind works in man not only with ideas that have been directly suggested to it by the challenges of the sense-objects, but it sometimes works irresistibly of its own accord, wandering into a labyrinth of its own associated ideas. Thus, an individual while seeing an elephant might have wondered within himself, "why not red", and at the next moment, might have also seen a huge fellow booted in speical dignity and mufflered in comfort. But all these must have happened in a twinkling, in such a small interval of time, that there was no time then for him to realize it all, for the mischievous mind by then wandered into its usual channels. Soon a hundred preoccupations might have flooded the mind and this picture had therefore been crowded out.

In the dream it so happens that the mind watches the impressions left on itself by the subconscious ideas created by the corresponding thoughts which the "waker", at their rise, was not fully aware of. Thus by the simple expression, "experienced and not experienced, real and unreal", the Master tries to incorporate into the stock of raw materials, out of which dreams are minted, even those impressions left on the mind by the lightening subconscious idea-fire-flakes ! Identifying himself with the world so created, the "dreamer" establishes in himself a subject-object-relationship in his dream and comes to experience its joys and sorrows. This "dreamer" personality is possible only when one is unconscious of one's own gross body. Where the body-consciousness springs up, there, the "dreamer" personality ends. The "dreamer" is none other than the "waker" who had lost the consciousness of the gross-body, and therefore unconscious of the field-of-objects interpreted by the body, and functions in the subtle-body with its own thoughts. Therefore the *Upanishad Rishi* says:

> * That very same individualized ego in the "dream-state" experiences its pleasures and pains in a field of existence created by its own *Maya*. During the

> **"state of profound sleep" when everything is merged, the same *Jeeva* is overpowered by *Tamas* and comes to exist as Bliss-nature.**

The ignorance of the waking condition and the consequent non-apprehension of the "waker"-personality gives the mind a freedom to project itself into a thousand varieties of mis-apprehensions. This power in the human mind to veil the Reality and in its place to project unreal imaginations, which have for the time being a perfect look of reality for the deluded is called the "Power of *Maya*". The dream-land created by the dreamer's own mind becomes the field of his joys and sorrows for him throughout his dream-condition.

Tracing the activities of that which expressed as the "waker" in the waking and as a "dreamer" in the dreaming, the teacher continues to give us here a true picture of the "deep-sleeper" who enjoys the dreamless-sleep. In the "waker" the Self is functioning through the gross-body, in the "dreamer" the same Self is expressing through the subtle-body, and in the "deep-sleeper" the glory of the Self is manifested through the *causal-body.*

The manifestations that were familiar for the "waker" and the "dreamer" are no more here in the deep-sleep; these two realms of plurality seem to have got absorbed here into their causal condition. The experience of deep-sleep is total *non-apprehension of* everything — a total "ignorance". This condition is described here as "overpowered by *Tamas*". When a room is steeped in darkness, we have no knowledge of what it contains. Many things of beauty or danger may be there; but so long as these objects are surrounded under a blanket of darkness, we have no knowledge of them.

Therefore, the "non-apprehension of Reality" (*Tamas*) cannot yield any quota of positive joy, nor can it give even an

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* स्वप्ने स जीवः सुखदुःखभोक्ता स्वमायया कल्पितजीवलोके ।
सुषुप्तिकाले सकलेविलीने तमोभिभूतः सुखरूपमेति ॥

(Kai. Up., Part I–13)

iota of sorrow; it is a negative state of impotent neutrality. Since the sorrow breeding plurality of the waking and the dream conditions are not there to persecute the "deep-sleeper" in his empirical experience, he has to accept his deep-sleep as a condition of bliss.

One carrying a big load up a hill gets weary and tired, feels panting and exhausted, and then he himself unloads his burden on a wayside resting-beam. At that moment the poor carrier feels great relief and joy which can be termed as a *negative* happiness in the sense that he has not gained anything new ; the sorrow due to the heavy load is no more with him and hence his happiness. Similarly here, in the deep-sleep-state also the sorrows caused by the mental agitations are no more, and hence, comparatively, we term deep-sleep as a state of bliss.

When we are neither seeing the dream nor are awake, and consequently when we are not having any disturbances from outside, we experience the inflow of a limitless and homogeneous *negative* bliss called the deep-sleep-state. In other words, when the life source, the Self "functions" from the body and "expresses" through its organs, it becomes the "waker-personality", while, when it leaves the physical plane and "functions" through the mind-and-intellect equipment, it becomes the dreamer-personality". When even the mind is dropped, the blissful destination within us is reached where the "sleeper" is the Lord and the Master. What happens to the mind in this state is beautifully explained in the following *Mantra.*

> * **When the mind is overpowered by Light, that mind sees no dream. At that time Bliss arises in the body.**

Consciousness illuminates for us things of the world and the mind, and thus we become aware of them. That in which we become aware of things is generally termed by us as light. In this sense Consciousness can be considered as Light or Effulgence.

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* स यदा तेजसाऽभिभूतो भवति ।
अत्रैष देवः स्वप्नान्न पश्यत्यथ
तदैतस्मिञ्शरीरे एतत्सुखं भवति ॥

(Pr. Up., Q. IV–6)

Now, when the mind is withdrawing itself from its " dream ", it comes nearer to the Source of All Light and, thus, as it were, gets blinded by the Transcendental intensity of the Infinite Light; and for the time being it can experience only darkness or *Avidya*. Mind blinded by *Atman's* Effulgence is thus the " sleeper ". At the time of sleep, the mind being nearest to the *Atman*, there is an experience of a negative bliss and hence, we call this sheath in which the sleeper works, as the " Bliss Sheath ".

The sense-objects of the world can neither give us joy nor sorrow. It is only because of our contact with the external world and our false values, that these objects gain any potency, if at all, in giving us any sense of joy or sorrow. In the deep-sleep-state since our mind is not functioning and since our intellect is not extrovert, we are not conscious at all of the external world of objects. Since we are not aware of them, they cannot tantalize us or charm us away, and so they cannot dole out to us any mental agitation !

Hence, the *Sruti* describes this sheath as the blissful, the *Anandamaya*. The Supreme Self identifying Itself with this, the deep-sleep-condition, is called as *Praajnya*. And, this *Praajnya* seeks its joys not in the external world of sense-objects as the waker does, nor in the inner subtler objects, as the dreamer does. In the sleep condition he enjoys a fulness of joy—joy because of the absence of sorrows. This state is the third quarter of the *Atman*.

> *** That is the state of deep-sleep wherein the sleeper does not desire any objects, nor does he see any dream. The third quarter (*pada*) is the *Praajnya* whose sphere is deep-sleep, in whom all (experiences) become unified or undifferentiated, who is verily a homogeneous mass of Consciousness entire, and who is the very gateway for the projection of consciousness into the other two planes of consciousness, the dream and the waking.**

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* यत्र सुप्तो न कंचन कामं कामयते न कंचन स्वप्नं पश्यति
तत्सुषुप्तम् । तत्सुषुप्तस्थान एकीभूतः प्रज्ञानघन
एवाऽऽनन्दमयो ह्यानन्दभुक् चेतोमुखः प्राज्ञस्तृतीयः पादः ॥

(Ma. Up.–5)

Contrasted with the other two states of consciousness, the waking and the dream, here, in the deep-sleep-state of Consciousness, the entire awareness available in the human being is consolidated and conserved. In the waking-state, the very same awareness is dissipated through the mind and the sense-organs in the outer world of sense objects by registering the knowledge-of-things. In the dream-state also, the consciousness in us is expressing itself in illuminating the thoughts of the mental world which we understand as the dream.

But, when we have transcended both these states of waking and dream, we will be in a state called the deep-sleep, and in that state the Conciousness in us is illuminating neither the gross objects of the outer world nor the subtler objects of the mental zone. There, in the deep-sleep-state, the entire consciousness in us seems to have collected together and crystallized into one mass of awareness. At this state of experience, our entire consciousness has become a homogeneous mass of awareness.

Again, the *Sruti* in trying to explain to us the nature of the "sleeper" the *Praajnya*, defines it as the very gateway-of-knowledge. In distinguishing the sleep-state as *chit*, the gateway to knowledge, the Master is trying to explain that the entire capacity to become aware of things is in this sleep-state consolidated and withdrawn into one homogeneous mass.

From the sleep-state, it is projected outwards to illuminate the dream-condition, and again, when the projection increases and comes to the external world, the same consciousness makes it possible for us to know the world of objects outside, in the waking-state. From the waking-state, when we withdraw our knowledge, attention or awareness from the external world of objects and from the body, we come to illumine the world of the mind and the *intellect ; this state is called the dream-state.*

When again, we withdraw our attention from the dream-state still interior to the inner world where the consciousness becomes one homogeneous mass, that condition of wake-less dreamless state is called the deep-sleep condition. Thus, to consider sleep as an archway, through which the striding procession or the shooting ray of consciousness emerges out, to illumine the fields of dream

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and the dales of the waking state, is indeed an example of the highest poetry made use of in the subjective analysis of the subtlest philosophy.

Just as the rays of the Sun are gathered and withdrawn as it were, into the burning disc of the setting Sun temporarily for the night and then emerge out again into shooting beams of light when the Sun rises, so too, when one goes to sleep the five great beams of light that used to emerge out through the five peep-holes of the sense-organs are withdrawn to the source of all perceptions temporarily, and they emerge out as soon as the individual returns to the waking-state. This period of experience in life, when the mind of an individual has withdrawn its contacts from the five organs-of-knowledge and the five organs-of-action, is considered as "sleep". In short, sleeping is the condition when a mind has vanished for the time being; when it emerges out the individual is pushed into the plane of his waking-state experiences. Therefore the Master says :

> * **He replied : "O Gargya, just as the rays of the Sun, when he sets, become one with the disk of light and they come forth again when the Sun next rises, so also, all these become one in the highest *Deva*, the mind. Therefore, at that time man no more hears, sees, smells, tastes or feels ; nor does he speak, nor take nor enjoy, nor evacuate, nor move…, and so they say, "he sleeps".**

Mind is the active agent behind all the sense-organs. In fact, without the mental contact the sense-organs cannot function. In *vedantic* literature we find a description which says that the mind itself, expressed in the outlines of our physical structure,

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* तस्मै स होवाच। यथा गार्ग्य मरीचयोऽर्कस्यास्तं
गच्छतः सर्वा एतस्मिंस्तेजोमण्डले एकीभवन्ति।
ताः पुनः पुनरुदयतः प्रचरन्त्येवं ह वै तत्सर्वं परे देवे
मनस्येकीभवति। तेन तर्ह्येष पुरुषो न शृणोति न पश्यति
न जिघ्रति न रसयते न स्पृशते नाभिवदते नाऽऽदत्ते
नाऽऽनन्दयते न विसृजते नेयायते स्वपितीत्याचक्षते॥

(Pr. Up., Q. IV–2)

is the sense-organs, and they, extended to the Universe, are the Five Great Elements. Thus viewed, mind is the apex of a cone, the base of which is the entire cosmic existence maintained by a manipulation of both the manifest (Gross) and the unmanifest (Subtle) Five Great Elements.

The real essence in the sense objects is that which is lent out to them by the mind, and therefore, the *Rishi* says that in the deep-sleep-state the entire world of plurality cognized by us through the five great windows in our structure, " becomes one in the highest *Deva*, the Mind ". That is to say, the powers of perception in the sense-organs get withdrawn from their respective centres and they get deposited as it were in the very mind. Here the enumerated list of *absentee-activities in deep-sleep-state includes all the functions* of the instruments-of-action and all the perceptions of the instruments-of-knowledge. Seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and feeling belong to the " perception " group of the instruments-of-knowledge, and to speak, to take, to enjoy, to evacuate and to move are the " functions " of the instruments-of-action. When both of them are inactive, the individual is considered *" asleep "*.

After having slept and temporarily enjoyed the reviving pause from the agitations and sorrows of the waking and dream, the individuality does not once for all get extinct, but is revived again to play its part either as a waker or as a dreamer. This is our experience. But why should it emerge out ? Why this painful resurrection again ?

What makes the sleeper wake up ? This has been a question that had, as in the present, so in the past too, fascinated all students of the subjective science. The final declaration of great Masters is that it is because of the impressions and tendencies (*Vasanas*) left over by thoughts entertained and actions done in the past. *Thus the Rishi says :*

> *** Again, due to its connection with the deeds done in its previous births, the very same individuality (*Jeeva*) comes back to the dream of the waking state. The being, who sports thus in the Three Cities–from whom has sprung up all diversities–is the substratum,**

the indivisible Bliss-Consciousness and, in Him alone the Three Cities go into dissolution.

Sleep is always distrubed when the sleeping person has an expectation of something to happen in the early hours of the following day. This expectation leaves a disturbing tendency in his mind, and that forces him to wake up at short intervals from his sleep. The tendencies so preserved in the mind, become active and throw up the lava of thoughts and they scorch in their devastating flow the calm peace of sleep. These thoughts push us into the waking-world of activities. Similarly, the *Vasanas* acquired by us in the past will force us to come out of our restful slumber on to the field of life to gather the harvest of our allotted experiences.

This is so because the individuality in us, that experiences the waking-world, itself is the entity, that becomes the dreamer dreaming its dreams, and it is again the same individuality that comes to live the peace of its slumber. In short, the "waker", the "dreamer" and the "deep-sleeper" are the three states of one and the same entity ; and it is the same entity who again wakes up from sleep to become the "waker", to continue helplessly the life of the yesterday's "waker". The individuality remaining the same, it thus harvests on the three fields.

"The same individualized ego returning to the dream of the waking-state" has an enchanting suggestion all its own. "As though dreaming (*Swapiti*) wakes up (*Prabudda*)" is reminiscent of the great Master Gaudapada's *Karika*, where he says that the Infinite Truth manifests to play under two conditions. They are (i) "non-apprehension of reality" (sleep) and (ii) "misapprehensions of reality" (waking and dreaming). Since the perceptions of the waker and the dreamer, in their respective world of plurality are all "misapprehensions of reality", Gaudapada brackets them together and calls them both as dream. Here also the Seer of the *Upanishad* says : from the sleep, prompted and

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* पुनश्च जन्मान्तरकर्मयोगात् स एव जीवः स्वपिति प्रबुद्धः।
पुरत्रये क्रीडति यश्च जीवस्ततस्तु जातं सकलं विचित्रम्।
आधारमानन्दमखण्डबोधं यस्मिल्लयं याति पुरत्रयं च ॥

(Kai. Up., Part I – 14)

pushed out by the compelling urge of the past "*Vasanas*", the "deep-sleeper" arrives to reach a delusory realm of pluralistic misconceptions and enjoys therein his own lot in life, either as a "waker", with his conscious mind, or as a 'dreamer", with his subconscious mind.

The experiences in all these three fields are different and yet, you can describe them all, because in all these diverse fields of different experiences *you* were the *one* entity that was the experiencer. The one common denominator that played the parts of the "waker" the "dreamer" and the "deep-sleeper" in the gross, subtle and causal bodies, is the Self-Eternal. This Consciousness Divine, that illuminated the different objects and, naturally therefore, the three different sets of experiences, is the changeless common factor in all of them—the *Atman*. The Self conditioned by the gross, the subtle and the causal bodies acts as though a *Jeeva* in the dream-city and in the dreamless sleep-city.

Even though this conditioned behaviour is real from our standpoint, it is only a recreational sport, a mere play, from the standpoint of the Self. Therefore by the process of contemplation when we analyse ourselves subjectively, we shall develop the capability in ourselves with which we can remove ourselves from the joys and sorrows of these three familiar identities namely the "waker", the "dreamer" and the "deep-sleeper" and come to be awake ourselves to the Reality behind them all. When a dreamer awakes, his dream rolls off. So too, by the process of self-analysis and reflection the *Jeeva* wakes up to realize the God-hood, all at once, wherein the world of plurality and its finite experiences which were real to the *Jeeva*, get totally annihilated and merged.

On waking up from a dream the dreamer merges back into his waking mind, and he at once realizes that the entire dream, with people and both inert and sentient things and beings, had sprung up from his own waking-mind. In the same way on awakening to the Divine-God-Consciousness, the Self, not only does such a Self-realized-one experience the end of his sense of individuality and the annihilation of the ego-projected world of plurality, but in his wisdom he clearly visualizes how his delusory

world of joys and sorrows was but a mass of projections of his mind on the Self. All these have sprung from the Absolute Consciousness alone, and the seer gets himself lost in utter wonderment at the realization of this truth. Hence the Teacher qualifies the Self here as the Substratum (*Aadhaar*).

In all gold ornaments gold is the *Aadhaar*; for all the waves the ocean is the substratum ; in all mud-pots, the cause is ever present, and the different shapes, colours, capacities, names etc., of the pots are all possible only because the *support* of the pots, the mud, exists. The substratum is the cause and support, and nothing can exist without its *Aadhaar.* If this concept is thus understood, then that which is the *Aadhaar* for the world-of experience is the Self, who is ever playing in our everyday life within ourselves as the waker, the dreamer and the deep-sleeper.

Our awareness of things is but a play of our Consciousness upon the objects perceived, emotions felt or ideas contemplated. Since Consciousness is the Light that brings all our experiences into our own knowledge, it is indicated here as the " Knowledge " —Knowledge *as such*, pure and simple, and not knowledge of anything. It is something like " Light in itself " and not " light reflected " from any object. " Light in itself " is not what we experience in its play upon any object, but it is the very power of illumination itself which can illumine all objects that are in its medium. Consciousness is Knowledge itself when it is not associated with any thought modification within the bosom.

Consciousness, the Self, can also be described as the " Knower of all ", because the knowledge of the waking-state-world or the dream-world or even the deep-sleep-state, would not have been ours but for the fact that this Illumining Principle, this Divine Spark of Life, this Pure Light was ever vibrant within us. In fact, none of us could have been the vital sentient being that we are, if the Consciousness, the Self, were not there. Summing up all these the Master says :

> *** This (*Atman*) is the Lord of all ; this is the knower of all ; this is the inner controller ; this is the source of all. And, this is that from which all things**

originate and in which they finally dissolve themselves.

The Consciousness in us is certainly the womb of all things, because, if Consciousness were not in us, neither the Sun, the moon, the stars nor the world of emotions or ideas would have been existent for us. They have an existence with reference to our ability to be aware of them. To say that man has got a pair of horns but only we are not aware of them, is equivalent to saying that man has no horns or they are non-existent. If Consciousness is not in us, the entire world will be non-existent as the pair of horns on any one of us.

When this Conscious Principle is projected out through the mind and intellect and through the sense-organs, it expresses itself in the awareness of world-of-objects and the world of ideas and thoughts. Remove this Principle of Awareness or Consciousness from a particular body ; then that body will no more illuminate for itself the ideas of any world. Thus we can say, not only in the Scriptural language, but as a scientific truth , that the world outside and the world within rise up from this Pure Consciousness, exist in Consciousness and will merge back into the Consciousness itself.

When a pencil of Sunlight is made to pass through a prism, we find it emerging out dispersing into the seven colours of the spectrum. They existed in the light and they will all merge back again into one light. This dispersal of the one pencil of light into the seven colours was only due to the property of the prism in front of the light.

Similarly, when the Consciousness, the Self, in us is projected forth, through the prism of the mind and intellect, we seem to acquire a knowledge of the plurality in the world. This is the theory of *Vedanta*. If, by the process of a spiritual technique, we can transcend the quipment of the mind and intellect, the awareness projected forth from us will merge with the Consciousness that is ever-present, around, about and within us, and we shall come to realize the All-pervading Reality behind all the names and forms, which is nothing other than the Self or *Atman* in ourselves.

• एष सर्वेश्वर एष सर्वज्ञ एषोऽन्तर्याम्येष योनिः
सर्वस्य प्रभवाप्ययौ हि भूतानाम् ॥ (Ma. Up. -6)

11

Life Beyond Embodiment

In the last chapter we had a detailed description of the three egoes. The ego that functions in the waking-state (*Viswa*), is distinctly different from the egoes that function in our dream-state (*Taijasa*) and in our deep-sleep-state (*Praajnya*). The " Waker " in us is disctinctly different from the " Dreamer " and the " Deep-sleeper ". Here, in the following stanza from the *Mandookya Karika,* the glosser is trying to give us the significance of such an observation which the great *Rishis* had so laboriously crystallized for us. The emphasis is in the conclusions of the stanza, that "It is one alone who is thus known in the three states".

> * *Viswa*, the first quarter is he who is All-pervading and who experiences the external, the gross objects (the Waker). *Taijasa*, the second quarter is he who cognizes the internal, the subtle bodies (the Dreamer). *Praajnya* is he who is a mass of consciousness. It is the One who is thus known as three in the three different planes of consciousness.

The idea is that the Life Principle, or Pure Consciousness

in us is one and the same, but identifying itself with the physical body, it looks out into the external objects. When it is aware of the world outside, the condition is termed as the waking-state. When the same Consciousness Principle in us, detaching from the physical structure, identifies itself with the mind-and-intellect, it becomes the Dreamer, dreaming its own world of mental impressions, which have certainly no direct relationship with or reference to the world outside. The same Consciousness, again, withdrawing entirely from the physical body and the subtle body, identifies itself with the causal-sheath and becomes the Deep Sleeper and enjoys the state of philosophical consciousness called the deep-sleep.

Thus, in our different identifications, we experience as though we are each in ourselves three distinct personalities ; in fact, it is intellectually acceptable that the Truth behind the three, the Vital Factor behind the three, the Life Principle presiding over the three fields of experiences, is one and the same—the I-idea.

This is no mere theory. It is something which can be experienced. It is not a call to a blind faith. It is, in fact, a declaration and a challenge for the intellect. The Hindu scripture does not applaud anyone who blindly follows a faith, but invites and insists upon the devotees to make use of their pure intellectual reasoning and thus earn for themselves a personal conviction. There are sufficient reasons to infer that in all these three planes of consciousness, the observer or the experiencer is one and the same entity.

No one can remember the experiences of another, e. g., *you* cannot remember any of my experiences, nor can I remember any of *your* experiences. On the other hand, I can remember my experiences as easily as you can remember your experiences, and naturally so; for, it is a law of memory that the rememberer and the experiencer must be one and the same. If this practical, common and rational idea is accepted by you, it cannot be very

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• बहिष्प्रज्ञो विभुर्विश्वो ह्यन्तः प्रज्ञस्तु तैजसः ।
घनप्रज्ञस्तथा प्राज्ञ एक एव त्रिधा स्मृतः ॥

difficult for you to get at the logic, that is necessary to understand that there is one Sacred Principle governing all the three planes of consciousness.

For, am I not able to remember the "Waker" that I was yesterday ? Can I not remember the dream that I had yesterday ? Can I not also remember how, after the dream, I went to the deep-sleep-state ? Thus, when I can remember *all three plnes* of consciousness through which I traversed during the 24 hours of life, certainly there must be one common experiencer who was living through the three planes of experiences in me. The *denominator* or factor, who is the common experiencer in three fields of my activity, is the common - I — *the* Eternal Factor, the Pure Consciousness.

Thus, in the stanza, the glosser is trying to hammer in the idea that the Reality is one and the same. The Life is one and the same, though it functions differently in the three different fields of existence and in the three different planes it seems to gain three different sets of experiences. What this common denominator or factor is, an indication is given in the following stanza :

> *** In that which is indicated as the changeless and Supreme Lord, there is a total cessation of all miseries. It is the One without a second among the plurality ; it is known as the *Thuriya*, the ever-Effulgent and All-pervading.**

The pluralistic world of mortality is experienced only in the waking-state, the dream-state and the deep-sleep-state. Once these three states are transcended, we enter into a state of consciousness called *Thuriya*. The *Thuriya* state is the fourth plane of consciousness into which the world of finitude and its imperfect experiences have no admission. The world of duality is available for our experience only in the worlds of the waking and the dream states. In the deep-sleep-state there is, in fact an experience of

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* निवृत्तेः सर्वदुःखानामीशानः प्रभुरव्ययः ।
अद्वैतः सर्वभावानां देवस्तुर्यो विभुः स्मृतः ॥

(Ma. Ka., Ag. Pr. –10)

something homogeneous ; only, we are not aware of it just at the time of experiencing it. But in the world of Reality, when we enter the zone of *Thuriya*, there, the entire pluralistic world rolls away and the experience of the non-dual Reality alone remains as eternally true.

Naturally therefore, it is very difficult for an uninitiated student to understand the correct import of "*Thuriya*". We need at such moments the blessings of a *Guru* who can direct our attention, thought and reason in the right channels so that we may discover for ourselves the right suggestiveness of the words. Therefore *Gaudapada* is, in the following stanzas steering our reflections on the right rails towards the ultimate destination of a correct understanding of the true meaning of "*Thuriya*".

> * *Visva* and *Taijasa* are both conditioned by cause and effect. But *Praajnya* is conditioned by cause alone. Both cause and effect do not exist in *Thuriya*.

The idea suggested in the *Mantra* is not quite obvious for a novice unless the student has in himself a very subtle and high power of reflection. *Gaudapada* declares that *Thuriya* is neither *Visva* nor *Taijasa*. In what way the Reality is not exactly the "waker" as the *Visva*, is now being pointed out. The "Waker" is conditioned by both ignorance and the ignorance-created ego-centric concepts of the mental and intellectual weaknesses and the world of delusions outside.

Cause is that state in which the effects are in it, yet in a conditon of unmanifestation. When the effects are manifested out of the cause, the cause invariably disappears and becomes the effect. *Visva* or the waking-state-ego is conditioned by both the cause and the effect. The cause, here, in the world of spirituality is the "ignorance" (*Avidya*) of our Real Nature. Not knowing that we are the Eternal, the Immortal, the All-pervading Pure Consciousness, we have projected ourselves out of

* कार्यकारणबद्धौ ताविष्येते विश्वतैजसौ ।
प्राज्ञः कारणबद्धस्तु द्वौ तौ तुर्ये न सिध्यतः ॥

(Ma. Ka., Ag. Pr.-11)

ourselves to see a world-of-objects. And then, getting ourselves enmeshed in these objects, with our attachment and hatred, with our likes and dislikes to them, we live the life of the waking-state, perplexed, agitated and torn asunder between our life's sorrows and joys !

Thus, *Viswa* can be considered as a poor victim of both the cause (the ignorance) and its effect (the world-of-objects). Here the world-of-objects includes not only the things and the beings of the world, but even our own intellect, mind and body. The "waker" in us, we all know, is not only conditioned by the external world of objects and circumstances but also chained and lashed by the mental and the intellectual personalities in us.

To the "dreamer", the *Taijasa*, created by the *Atman* identifying Itself with the subtle-body, certainly there is no world of outer gross objects, but at the same time, it is conditioned by the quality and the set-up of things in the dream world. Therefore *Gaudapada* states that *Taijasa* also is conditioned by both the cause (ignorance) and the effect (the world of plurality within the mind).

If both *Viswa* and *Taijasa* are thus conditioned by the cause and effect, in what way is the *Praajnya*, the "sleeper", different from the "waker" and the "dreamer"? It is pointed out that the sleep-state-ego is conditioned merely by the cause. During the deep-sleep-state we are not aware of any objects or any world of plurality. In the deep-sleep we are aware only of one main negative homogeneous idea, "*I do not know*". A continuous unbroken thought of "*I do not know*" is all that we know, and therefore, in the deep-sleep-state we experience nothing but *ignorance. Ignorance of our* Reality is, we have found, the cause of the entire world of mischief and misunderstanding, plurality and finitude. Therefore, the sleeper is conditioned by only the cause out of which the effects, the variegated plurality, the multiple world of phenomenon have not yet risen up.

If, as the Master says, *Viswa* and *Taijasa* are conditioned by both cause and effect, and *Praajnya* is conditioned by cause alone, what exactly is the condition of the *Thuriya*, the fourth state? This is the theme of the stanza. It positively declares that the

Thuriya, the Eternal, is conditioned neither by the cause nor by the effect. As far as the post is concerned, neither the horrid nature nor dress nor the parts of the physical structure of the ghost are in it as its conditioning ! In the post there is no ghost !

The superimposed ghost vision is illusory, and an illusion cannot condition the Truth or the Reality. The water of the mirage cannot wet even a single grain of sand in the desert ! Similarly, none of the causes and effects, which are the conditionings upon the "waker", the "dreamer" and the "deep-sleeper", can defile the Reality or the Truth behind the three. By saying so, the Master is hinting at the truth that the egoes of the waking, the dream and the deep-sleep state are only delusory superimpositions upon the *Thuriya*, the Reality.

The cause which we explained as ignorance (*Avidya*) is nothing other than the non-apprehension of Reality. This produces as its effect the illusory world of objects ; the effect in this sense can be termed as mis-apprehension. The non-apprehension of Reality causes the mis-apprehension in our life. Both the "waker" and the "dreamer" are always conditioned by both non-apprehension and mis-apprehension. In the sleep-state the ego in us is conditioned by only the non-apprehension of Reality, the cause.

Now, when we are told that in *Thuriya* there is neither non-apprehension nor mis-apprehension, the doubt may arise in our minds as to what exactly is the difference between the *Thuriya* and the *Praajnya*—between the Reality and the deep-sleep-state.

This is being clarified in the following stanza ;

> * *Praajnya* does not know anything of the truth or the untruth, nor does *Praajnya* know anything of the Self or of the non-self ; *Praajnya* knows nothing. But *Thuriya* is ever the All-seeing and It is always the

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* नात्मानं न परांश्चैव न सत्यं नापि चानृतं ।
प्राज्ञः किंचन संवेत्ति तुर्यं तत्सर्वदृक्सदा ॥

(Ma. Ka., Ag. Pr. – 12)

All-knowing.

In the method of negation there is always the danger of the student understanding the Reality to be "that which is not negated!" In the last stanza Gauḍapada negated both the waking-state and the dream-state in *Thuriya* and so, there is the dange of the student concluding that the Reality must be the deep-sleep-condition and the ego therein! In order to negate this also, we have been given in this stanza more details and arguments.

Here we have a clear comparision between the objectless world of sleep and the sleepless world of Reality. Sleep itself is very difficult for us to conceive or understand; much more severe certainly must be the labour one will have to exert in correctly grasping the true import of the *Upanishads*, when they try to point out to us the sleepless Reality.

In this stanza, the Master explains that the deep-sleep-state-ego knows nothing—neither the truth nor the falsehood; neither the right nor the wrong; neither the *Atman* nor the *Àn-atman*. Sleep is not a condition of perfection; it is not a condition of Pure Awareness. In deep-sleep-state, we experience only the knowledge of "ignorance-incarnate"

Looking at darkness is not seeing light. On the other hand. I *Thuriya* is a state of Eternal and continuous "*knowing*". In this sense *Thuriya* and *Praajnya* are as self-opposing and contrar to each other, as light is to darkness. In the deep-sleep-state w know that "*We do not know anything*". In *Thuriya* it is a cond tion of knowledge where we know continuously that "*We kn everything*". *Thuriya* is Pure Knowledge and as such its v essential nature is "*knowing*".

Light needs no service of another light to illumine it; l itself is illumination. Similarly, in order to know the *Atma* other knowledge is necessary and as such, *Atman*, the su needs no other subject to know the knowledge of *A Atman* or *Thuriya* is "Knowing" and hence, we have go feature of *Thuriya* very succulently pointed out by the M when he says that *Thuriya* is "ever All-seeing".

On deeply reflecting upon the last two stanzas, a doubt may now arise and it is being answered here. We are told that in deep-sleep-state there is no cognition of duality. We are told that in *Thuriya* also there is no world-of-objects intruding upon our awareness. If thus, both in the deep-sleep-state and in *Thuriya* there is the non-cognition of duality, in what way is *Thuriya* different from the deep-sleep-state ? In short, an objector may argue that since there is non-cognition of duality in *Thuriya*, it must be nothing other than the deep-sleep-state.

> *** The non-cognition of duality is equal in both deep-sleep and *Thuriya*, but the sleeper, conditioned in his sleep, is in the form of the cause ; and this—the sleep or the cause (*Avidya*)—does not exist in *Thuriya*.**

Sceptics of the world who, for their own misconceived ends, want to prove that religion is empty and hollow ; they try to understand only superficially the great scriptures and come to their own conclusions According to them, when everything is said and understood, *Vedanta* points out a happy state of liberation in a psychological and intellectual stupor ! The absurdity of their logic is a measure of their imperfect understanding. *Sruti* cannot be understood and its significances examined merely by the intellect, however sharp it may be. A lot of deliberate and sincere living of its values alone can give us even an intellectual grasp of the theme of *Vedanta*.

The main difference between the *Thuriya* state and the deep-sleep-state is being pointed out here very clearly. The sleeper is conditioned by the state of sleep which is characterized by the absence of the Knowledge of Reality ; and in this ignorance, we have the cause for the cognition of the plurality. In the case of *Thuriya* it being " an ever All-seeing factor ", there is no absence of the Knowledge of Reality and, therefore, the condition of sleep is not the same as the state of *Thuriya*.

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* द्वैतस्याग्रहणं तुल्यमुभयोः प्राज्ञतुर्ययोः ।
बीजनिद्रायुतः प्राज्ञः सा च तुर्ये न विद्यते ॥

(Ma. Ka., Ag. Pr. - 13)

The blissful moments of Self-hood are moments of dynamic knowing, continuous and unfluttering, a state of perfect illumination, where there are no quarters for darkness to remain; it is a state of continuous., all-pervading, endless, eternal, Perfect Knowledge. *Thuriya* is not a state which is antecedent or subsequent to any other state ; it is neither cause of anything nor the effect of any other cause. It is changeless and Eternal. It is Pure Knowledge. Therefore, the causal condition cannot be obtained in the state of *Thuriya*. *Thuriya* is Knowledge Absolute in which ignorance has no existence at all.

We have found that when the Reality, conscious of the body identifying Itself as the gross-body, looks out into the world, it experiences the multiplicity in the waking-state-world, and the experiences gained therein are the contents of the life of the "Waker". When the awareness is withdrawn from the physical structure, the outer world-of-objects also disappears. When one's attention is thus withdrawn, one identifies oneself with the subtle-body constituted of the mind and the intellect ; this creates the world of dream, and roaming about in it, one gathers one's share of experiences in the dream life.

When the Master states that the "Waker" and the "Dreamer" are conditioned by dream and sleep, he means that they are conditioned by both the effect and the cause, the mis-apprehension and non-apprehension. The "Sleeper" on the other hand is conditioned by "Sleep" without "dream", meaning, it is conditioned by non-apprehension without any mis-apprehensions—which is the same as saying that in deep-sleep-state the ego is conditioned only by "ignorance" (the *Avidya*) and not by the pluralistic world-of-objects, gross or subtle, which are the effects of the cause, the "ignorance".

The Master of the *Karika* is labouring-hard to bring home to us the distinction between the other states of consciousness known to us in our ordinary life and the unknown state of consciousness, the seemingly novel experience of the Reality explained by the *Upanishad* as the "fourth state of consciousness". He says that in that Pure Awareness, in *Thuriya*, there is neither sleep nor dream. Therefore he says :

> * *Viswa* and *Taijasa* the former two are associated with the conditions of dream and sleep; *praajnya* is the state of sleep without dream. Those who have known the Truth, see neither sleep nor dream in *Thuriya.*

In order to prove that this idea is neither a mere intellectual hypothesis nor a mere philosophical theory but that it is an experienceable quantum, a truth lived by many, a fact that can be experienced by anybody who can prepare himself for this great experience, he says that the statement of the absense of both dream and sleep, mis-apprehension and non-apprehension, is a declaration of those great Seers who have known the Truth. In short, we must understand from this stanza that the fourth state of consciousness, the State of Perfection, discussed and explained in the *Upanishad*, is a state of experience which is something different from all our known experiences in the objectified pluralistic world of phenomenon.

Experience of Truth is not a knowledge gained by the intervention of any instrument of understanding playing upon an object-of-knowledge to be understood. *Thuriya* is a state wherein the "subject" and the 'objects" merge themselves into a homogeneous mass of Pure Knowledge which is Itself the Knowledge Absolute. More and more details of the how, why, etc., of it would be available as we go forward with the discussions.

The Supreme Being cannot be described in language, since language can express itself only by describing the qualities, the properties, the actions, etc., of the objects described. In the Eternal Factor, neither qualities nor action can however be predicated. A substance is, in Natural Sciences, described as that which has properties; and substances are always finite. In case we describe the Supreme Reality as having any property, certainly we will thereby be pulling down the Infinite to the level of the finite, the Immortal to the base level of mortality !

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* स्वप्ननिद्रायुतावाद्यौ प्राज्ञस्त्वस्वप्ननिद्रया।
न निद्रां नैव च स्वप्नं तुर्ये पश्यन्ति निश्चिताः॥

(Ma. Ka., Ag. Pr. - 14)

out to us that the *Thuriya* is not the dream. *Taijasa* has already been described as that consciousness which is aware of a world within, a world of dream objects. By negating thus the inner-awareness, the *Rishi* is pointing out to us that the *Atman* or the Life Force in man is not the dreamer.

Na bahish prajnyam : "Not that which is conscious of the external object-world." It means that the fourth plane of Consciousness is not the waking-state-ego the *Vaiswanara.* The "waker", we have seen, is fully aware of the external world of objects.

Na ubhayatah prajnyam : "Not that which is conscious of both". When we negate, as we have done, the first two phases, both the waking-state and the dream-state, the obvious doubt that would arise in the mind of the disciple will be that the *Atman* might be a state in-between the sleep and the dream, a state wherein we are conscious slightly of both the outer world and the inner world !! Such moments are lived by almost all of us frequently. After a heavy lunch when we are just preparing for our dull forty-winks there is a misty moment when neither are we fully aware of the external world, nor are we totally unconscious of the world of dreamy nothingness in ourselves. Even this state is negated by the term now under discussion.

Na prajnyana ghanam : "Not that which is a mass of consciousness." When we have thus negated the *Vaiswanara*, the *Taijasa* and the state in between them, the thought would at once run in the seeker that it must be then the *Praajnya*, the Ego in the deep-sleep-state. We have already discussed earlier, in the *Mantra* describing the *Praajnya*, wherein we found that *Praajnya* is a state in which the entire consciousness of the being is withdrawn from the gross-body and the subtle-body and the entire lot of it has come to lie coiled itself upon itself into a homogeneous mass. Thus, by the expression under discussion, the *Rishi* is negating that in *Thuriya* there is no *Praajnya* even.

Na prajnyam : "Not that which is simple consciousness." The entire gamut of negation should naturally leave the student with only one possibility. He must certainly understand then that

the *Atman* is just his simple consciousness. But, those daring great thinkers of the Hindu Philosophy, uncompromisingly stood on the platform of their knowledge, walled round so well with their ruthless logic and sturdy reason and declared that the Self in us cannot be described correctly even by the simple term "Consciousness". This negation is only due to the fact that to describe the Reality as having a property would be to make the Infinite a finite substance. Again, the term "Consciousness" has a meaning only with reference to the opposite quality. The word "Light" is redundant in the Sun; for, the Sun knows no darkness at all and hence, "light" has no meaning in the Sun. Similarly, sentience can have some sense only in a world where insentience also has a place. *Thuriya*, the Truth is the illumination of both the sentient and the insentient !!

Na aprajnayam : "It is not insentience." Here, now we have, in this term, a negation of the only proposition left in the permutation and combination of the possible terms. If all the previously explained five negations be true, then the only loophole through which the finite human intellect could perceive and feel the Reality would be through the definition that it is insentient. For, we have been told by the Master that the *Atman* is neither aware of the outer world, nor of the inner world, nor is it conscious of both, nor is it a mass of consciousness, nor is it a simple consciousness. Therefore, the only possibility is in that it can be only insentient. Even this idea is negated by the *Rishi* when he says that it is (*Na aprajnyam*) not that which is insentient.

In short, the definition in the first half of the stanza is trying to negate all the three planes of consciousness generally known to man, and it also declares that none of the terms or terminologies used in the ordinary language is applicable in describing the Eternal and the Immortal.

In the second half of the *Mantra*, the Seer is trying to replenish us with some positive ideas about the qualities of the *Atman*. Even here we must understand that this positive description is provided through a language of negative assertions. The implication of each term used herein is so vast that to gain a correct understanding of it, is to get for ourselves the knowledge

of the nature of *Thuriya.*

Adrishtam : "Unseen". The self is explained here as that which is not perceived by the sense-organs. By the term unseen, it is not only meant that the Self has no form, but the word is used in its amplest implication of negation in it of the services of all the other sense-organs. Self is not an object capable of being perceived by any of the five sense-organs of knowledge that human beings are provided with.

Avyavaharyam : "Not related to anything". By this term it is indicated that the Self is an All-Pervading Factor and that it is not related with things of the world. In the world all things and beings have their transaction "*Vyavahara*" only in the Self. As an analogy we may take Space. Space is not related with anything, and yet, no relationship can exist except in space. Similarly the Reality, the Eternal, the Immortal is the medium in which all names and forms of the world function in their delusory dealings with one another.

Agrahyam : "Incomprehensible". The above two terms and their meaning clearly give the import that the Self cannot be comprehended by the mind. The mind can comprehend that which is reported to it through any one or more of the sense-organs. In order to be perceived by the sense-organs, the Self must be any one of the five sense-objects. Sense-organs, viz., eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and skin can perceive only their respective objects of shape, sound, smell, taste and touch. Since the Self is not a sense-object and since it has no relationship with anything else, it can never be comprehended by the mind.

Alakshanam : "Uninferable". If we cannot perceive a thing through direct experience, then the other channel of ordinary knowledge that is open to us is inference. When there is fire in the kitchen, we have often noticed smoke also. Thus, we have derived a knowledge through our direct perception that wherever there is smoke, there must be fire too. Later on when we see the effect viz. the smoke, we infer and derive the knowledge that there is fire, although we may not actually see the fire in the distant smoky ranges.

Here the inferential knowledge of *the existence of fire* is arrived at because of its effect, the smoke which we had actually observed. This effect is called in Sanskrit terminology as *Lakshana*. Since the *Atman* has no such effects from which we could infer its existence, the Self is defined by the great Masters of the *Upanishads* as *Alakshanam* (Uninferable).

Achintyam : "Unthinkable." From the above explanations it is self evident that if there is a factor which is unseen, incomprehensible and uninferable, then naturally, that factor must be certainly unthinkable.

Avyapadesyam : "Indescribable." *It is logical that in the* circumstances the *Atman* cannot be described since descriptions are but expressions of our experiences gained either through the sense-organs or the mind or the intellect.

Eka-atma-pratyaya-saram : "Essentially of the nature of *the consciousness.*" *When we are told of all the above negations* and we have concluded that the Supreme Reality is indescribable, the student, however intelligent he may be, must necessarily feel despaired and confused ; his despair and confusion, as expressed in his face, are noticed by the Master, and hence the Master tries to explain to the student more elaborately the concept of the Reality.

He says that the *Atman* is of the nature of Pure Consciousness, Pure Knowledge. Ordinarily in our daily intercourse with life, we gain only knowledge *of* things. We know things *of* the world, and the knowledge in us is always conditioned by the objects or thoughts, or ideas in us. Either we know *of* a sound or of such other sense perceptions, or *of* our feelings or *of* our thoughts, but we do not know the knowledge by which we know our ideas. Here the Master emphasizes that the Reality is knowledge *as such*, and it has no objects to qualify. It is Pure Awareness in the light of which all sense-organs go about doing their routine work of contacting their individual objects.

After thus negating all qualities and qualifications with which we generally understand and become aware of things in the world

of pluralistic objects, the Master now gives some seemingly positive concepts of the *Atman*. Even here we must understand that though the *Rishi* has used positive words, the method employed is one of positive negation.

Prapanchopashamam : " Dissolution of all phenomena. " The *Thuriya* state is the realm into which the world of finitude and its imperfect experiences have no admission. It is only up to the gate of *Thuriya* that we have the plurality and the experience of the plurality. *Prapancha* which is constituted of the pluralistic world of mortality (change) is experienced only in the waking-state, the dream-state and the deep-sleep-state. Once these three states are transcended, we enter into the world of Reality, and there, in *Thuriya*, the worlds of finitude and change, mortality and sorrows, imperfections and deceits, limitations and tears, have no entry.

Shantham : " The Peaceful. " In our earlier discussions we have found that *Ashanthi* or agitations are caused in us because of our desires, likes, dislikes, etc. Once we have retired from the world of duality into the Realm of the Self, we are entering the Temple of Peace, Eternal and Perfect.

Shivam : " All-bliss, All-auspiciousness. " The peaceful is the blissful ; *Shanti* itself is *Sukha*. Happiness is but the mental condition of poise, as such, that which is all-peaceful must necessarily become all-blissful. Inauspiciousness can come only in the world of plurality, as such, the only way we can signify the *Thuriya* state is by the term of auspiciousness.

Advaitam : ' Non-dual. " When the superimposed ghost retires at the vision of the post, all superimpositions upon it retire and " the one without a second ", the Reality of the post alone exists. The world of duality is available for our experience only in the worlds of the waking and the dream-states. In the deep-sleep-state there is, in fact, an experience of something homogeneous ; only, we are not aware of it at the time of experiencing it. But in the world of Reality, when we enter the zone of *Thuriya*, here, the entire pluralistic world rolls away and the experience of the non-dual Reality alone remains as eternally true.

After having thus indicated the *Thuriya* state through the language of negation and after having stated some positive concepts, here the *Rishi* concludes saying that "This is what is known as the *Thuriya*". Thus, though the *Mantra* is one of the glorious definitions of Reality, it does not define directly but it has only accomplished its function through the technique of negation. Having thus negated the world of plurality within ourselves, the master points out towards a state, away from the waking, the dream and the deep-sleep-states, and he says to his disciple, "This then is the *Atman*." Indicating *Atman* as an object, as it were, the *Guru* impresses upon his disciple by saying "And it is to be realized."

The significance of the concluding words of the Master is very deep and sacred. After all these elaborate attempts to arrive at a satisfactory definition of the Supreme Reality, the Master says to the disciple, "what you have now understood intellectually is not in itself the fulfilment of a Scriptural study." The Scriptures are to be understood through reflection, no doubt, but a mere understanding through reflection, in itself is not the end of the *Brahma Vidya*. The meaning arrived at is to be meditated upon, until realized.

In the end every student should accomplish the feat of detaching himself from the outer envelopments of matter and come to rediscover in himself the Sacred Centre in which the Subject in him revels within. The world-of-objects and their perceptions are like the mirage-water in the desert ; not a single grain of sand has ever been drenched by the moisture in the mirage !

Similarly, the disciple, it is understood here, is to experience within himself that Truth which is non-dual and beyond all phenomena. No amount of the study and reflection will fulfil the goal of life. Meditation is the royal path to success and final glory in spiritual life.

When does one realize this fourth plane of consciousness, may now be the question in the mind of the student. In the following stanzas the Master is giving the answer to this possible question :

> * **Dream is the mis-apprehension of Reality ; sleep is the state in which one is in a state of non-apprehension of Reality. When the erroneous knowledge in these two disappears, *Thuriya* is realized.**

Here the words " dream " and " sleep " are used in their spiritual significance, meaning mis-apprehension and non-apprehension of Reality. Waking-state (*Jagrath*) is not specially mentioned here since the waking-state is included and incorporated in the term " dream " since both the waking and dream-states are characterised by the mis-apprehension of Reality. Whether one mistakes a rope to be a snake or a stick, in both the cases there is a mis-apprehension of Reality; similarly, whether we are dreaming or waking, the cognition is false and we live in the mis-apprehension of Reality.

Thus the stanza indicates that *Thuriya* is beyond the mis-apprehension. Again sleep is used here to mean non-apprehension. We have already found that the non-apprehension of Truth is the cause for mis-apprehension of the pluralistic phenomenal world both in the waking and in the dream-states. Thus the non-apprehension is the cause and the mis-apprehension of both the dream and the waking-states is the effect.

When we have transcended both the cause, the Ignorance of our own nature, and the effects, the pluralistic world of perceptions, we shall experience the Reality in the Fourth plane of Consciousnes, the *Thuriya*.

The cause, non-apprehension (Ignorance), is removed by the apprehension of Reality (*Knowledge*). Where the cause had ended the effects cannot remain ; where Ignorance has ended, the phenomenal world and its pluralistic expressions cannot exist.

Using both the words " dream " and " sleep " in their meaning of mis-apprehension and non-apprehension of Reality, the

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* अन्यथा गृह्णतः स्वप्नो निद्रा तत्वमजानतः।
विपर्यासे तयो क्षीणे तुरीयं पदमश्नुते ॥

(Ma. Ka., Ag. Pr. – 15)

Glosser is now trying to assure that anyone can subjectively experience the great Truth, the Fourth state of consciousness, when, through the *Vedantic Sadhana* and meditation, one has awakened oneself to the Divine Consciousness. Here is a definite assurance of the Master in that he repeatedly emphasizes the fact that the *Upanishadic* truths are not mere utopian dreams but are experiences which can be brought within the life of every practitioner.

> *** When the individual soul sleeping under the influence of the beginningless *Maya* is awakened, it realizes in itself the Non-duality, which is beginningless and dreamless.**

Man is now under his own self-delusion living in a state of sleep. This means that man is existing today in the non-apprehension of the Real Nature of himself as the All-pervading Consciousness. This state of affairs has been his lot from the time of creation, which is from the time when the first Unit-of-time came to be conceived, and therefore without beginning (*Anadi*). From the time of creation down to the present moment we have been living in a state of sleep; that is non-apprehension of Reality. When the *ego*, thus sleeping now, awakens fully to the Truth, the Reality of its own nature, it will wake up to that Reality or Truth which is Non-dual, beginningless and dreamless.

Samsar is for the ego, and at the destruction of the ego all its false concepts and limitations must necessarily end. The construction of the ego and how its delusory ideas of separative existence have come to us, have all been described earlier. When we awake thus to the greater Reality, through the process of meditation, we get to know that plane of consciousness called *Thuriya* wherein we have neither non-apprehension nor mis-apprehension of Truth.

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* अनादिमायया सुप्तो यदा जीवः प्रबुध्यते।
अजमनिद्रमस्वप्नमद्वैतं बुध्यते तदा॥

(Ma. Ka., Ag. Pr. – 16)

Section - IV

Dynamics of Human Personality

12

The Roots of Individual Life

In the last chapter it was pointed out that the *Atman* or the Self in every individual is the Pure Consciousness which is beyond the planes of waking, dream and deep sleep states, and is not in any way conditioned with the happenings of those three states, which in their totality is what is experienced as life by all individuals. As such, the *Atman* seems to have no particular function in the active life of the human beings, since all transactions in life are through the body, the mind and the intellect. In order to remove such a possible doubt, Lord Krishna explains in the following stanza what exactly are the special functions of the Matter and the Spiritual entities in the human being.

> * In the production of the effect and the cause, *Prakriti* is said to be the cause; in the experience of pleasure and pain, *Purusha* is said to be the cause.

All forms and qualities are born of Matter (*Prakriti*). Matter

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* कार्यकारणकर्तृत्वे हेतुः प्रकृतिरुच्यते ।
पुरुषः सुखदुःखानां भोक्तृत्वे हेतुरुच्यते ॥ (Ge. Ch. XIII - 21)

is that out of which all forms which contitute the world of matter and qualities such as pleasure, pain, delusion and such other mental states spring from. All changes and modifications belong to the realm of Matter and the *Atman* is that which perceives the entire world-of-objects and their reactions upon the ego which is the individual's direct reaction to the world. The *Atman* is the light of Consciousness which illumines the world-of-objects outside and the instruments of perception, feeling and thought within.

Pleasure and pain are the reactions in our intellect. When desirable objects in a conducive pattern reach our life, the experience is called "pleasure". And the opposite sensation, produced by undesirable objects, is called "pain". Every experience, in its final analysis, is adjudged either as pain or as pleasure. The Awareness in us illumines these. It would be impossible to be conscious of the flow of experiences without the Grace of the Consciousness. Therefore, the Spirit (*Purusha*) is explained here as the cause for all the experiences in life.

The Spiritual Factor is the entity by whose contact the equipments function, and without which the equipments become dull and insentient. If Consciousness were not in us, we would not be able to experience either the world outside or the world within us. It is this Consciousness that maintains, nourishes and sustains all the possibilities in us. Without this Spiritual Spark functioning in us, we would be no more intelligent or divine than the stone-world.

In Philosophy, the term "world" means not only the world of objects perceived by us through our sense-organs, but it includes in its concept, the world experienced through and interpreted by the mind and intellect also. Thus the world-of-objects, the world-of-feelings and the world-of-ideas that we experience, together in their totality constitute the 'world" (*Jagat*). This is supported by the Conscious Principle with Its grace showering upon them all. In this sense Krishna's declaration is scientifically true, when He says that the Principle of Consciousness is that by which the entire "world" of experiences is sustained.

The above mentioned "*Purusha*" and "*Prakriti*" (Nature),

each functioning in the embrace of the other, cause all the manifestations of the world of plurality. If matter were not there, the latent dynamism of the Spirit will not find a field for its expression. Matter by itself, in its inertness, will not be able to express the similitude of Consciousness unless the Spirit were there to dynamise it. This idea becomes clear to us when we take an example from the modern world.

With steel and iron the manufacturer completes a steam engine, and when the inert cold engine is harnessed to steam at high pressure, it does work. Steam by itself can never express its dynamic capacity and energy; on the other hand, when it is made to function through a given steam engine, it is capable of giving motion and performance to the inert mechanical assemblage.

This idea is further elaborated with a more complete analogy of a chariot in the *Kathopanishad* as follows :

> * Consider the *Atman* as the Lord of the " chariot ", the body as the " chariot ", the intellect as the " charioteer " and the mind as the " reins ".
>
> ** The senses (the wise say) are the "horses", and the roads are the sense-objects. The wise call Him the enjoyer (when He is) yoked with the body, the senses and the mind.

In the above analogy of the Chariot, the Self is the master

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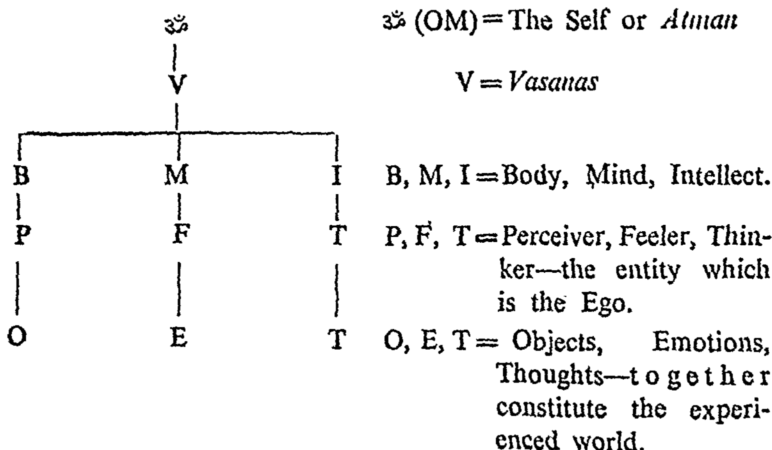
* आत्मानं रथिनं विद्धि
शरीरं रथमेव तु।
बुद्धिं तु सारथिं विद्धि
मनः प्रग्रहमेव च॥

(Kat. Up., Ch. I, Sec. III-3)

** इन्द्रियाणि हयानाहु-
विषयांस्तेषु गोचरान्।
आत्मेन्द्रियमनोयुक्तं
भोक्तेत्याहुर्मनीषिणः॥

(Kat. Up., Ch. I, Sec. III-4)

of the chariot ; the pure discriminating intellect is the charioteer ; the body of the individual is the chariot and the reins with which the intellect guides the movements of the body, is the mind. The Self is the Spiritual Factor by whose contact the equipments function and without which the chariot and the charioteer all become inert and *insentient*. If consciousness, the Self, were not in us, we would not be table to experience either the world outside or the world within us. It is the Self that maintains, nourishes and sustains all the possibilities in us. Without this Spiritual Spark functioning in us, we would be no more intelligent or alive than a mere statue. This Pure Consciousness, the Self, in us is represented in the following diagram by the symbol ' OM ".



In every experience in life, man contacts the world through the media of three equipments in him. They are his body, mind and the intellect, represented in the diagram by the symbols " B ", " M " and " I " respectively. In the body (gross body) is located the five sense-organs of perception which are represented as horses in the analogy. Without the sense-organs, the ears, the eyes, the nose, the tongue and the skin, the body-chariot cannot move. If the eyes are not there, the forms cannot be ; with our ears surely we cannot grasp the concept of forms. So too, with every other sense-organ. If the organs were not with us, our birth in this life would have been a mad man's maddening extravagance, idle and purposeless. Lord, the Creator is no mad man. There is a purpose

definite and sure, in each one's arrival here, be it a worm or be it a king. Since without the sense-organs the purpose of our embodiment is defeated, the Law sees to it that no child is born without the sense-organs ; for, in that case, the child would be defeating the very purpose of its creation. Hence the *Sruti* says that the horses that draw the body-chariot are the sense-organs.

Continuing the analogy of the chariot, the Upanishad says that the roads on which the sense-horses trot are the sense-objects. We have already seen that the eyes can function only in the realm of forms, the ears can function only in the field of sounds, the tongue can function only in the matter of taste and the skin through the avenue of touches. On the whole, it means that the sense-organs, because of which the body continues to exist, function each only in its own field of objects.

The sense-organs are the channels through which the world of objects reaches within, and the inner focus of the five sense-organs is the mind. In fact, without the mental contact the sense-organs cannot function. It is the contact with the mind that gives the sense-organs their respective powers of perception. When the mind is preoccupied with its own thoughts and feelings, the sense-organs cannot perceive the world of objects around them. Hence the *Sruti* is right when it compares the mind to the reins which hold and control the sense-horses in their journey in the path of sense-objects.

The mind in its turn is directed by the intellect, which in the analogy, is compared to the charioteer. The impulses received by the mind are rationally classified and systematized into their knowledge of perception by the intellect which then orders the *organs of perception and action to react to the stimuli received* from the outer world.

At all these three levels of sense perception, mental reception and intellectual assimilation, there is a continuous sense of "I"-ness, which is called the "ego". Through the body the "ego" experiences the world of objects, through the mind, the world of emotions and through the intellect, the world of thoughts. This ego " is none other than the Perceiver-Feeler-Thinker entity in

us represented in the diagram by the letters P, F and T.

From what has been said so far, it can be seen that an individual (P–F–T) contacts the world of objects, emotions and thoughts (O–E–T) through the media of the body, mind and intellect (B–M–I). All this is possible only so long as the Spirit or Life represented by ' OM " in the diagram, functions *through* the equipments of the B, M and I, and makes them function as the intelligent man. And yet, the true entity in us who seems to experience the joys and sorrows of life, is not the *Atman* as such, but the "conditioned" *Atman.* The supreme Consciousness conditioned by the B–M–I is the ego-centre (*Jeeva*), who seems to enjoy and suffer the passing circumstances of this evanescent life, called the *Samasar*.

Pursuing this analysis further we can find that the experiencer is a composite structure of four different entities, viz. the physical, the mental, the intellectual and the spiritual. Of these, the physical body is the grossest aspect of man, and even though the size and shape of the body differ from individual to individual, the essential materials composing it and the functions of the various organs therein are common to all human beings. Again, the subtlest aspect, namely, the Consciousness which is the core of man's composite personality, is also one and the same in all human beings.

The religious thinkers, after having scientifically discovered that these two (the grossest and the subtlest) aspects are common to mankind, proved by logical analysis and deduction that the variable factor in man is only the mind-and-intellect equipment. The kaliedoscopic pattern of human behaviours is therefore attributed to the differences in the texture and quality of the mind-and-intellect. Hence, for a complete understanding of human nature, the unavoidable question is, but what is the stuff of the mind ? The mind has been explained in our *Shastras* in various ways : According to one definition, the mind is nothing but a bundle of *Vasanas* (impressions). To the modern psychologist, the mind is nothing but "temperament". One of the explanations given by the Hindu *Shastras* to understand the mind, is by comparing it to a river.

The river is not a mere volume of water between two banks. The essence of a river lies in the *incessant* flow of *water* from its source towards its end. Similarly, the mind is the *unceasing flow of our thoughts*. When thoughts are "flowing" at a great speed, *one following the other unceasingly, that flow of thought* is called the "mind". If we can stop that flow, there is no more functioning of the mind.

Again, take the illustration of a lighted *agarbathi* (*joss-stick*) rotated by the hand. One then gets the illusion of a golden effulgent ring ; but in reality the circle or ring has no existence apart from the whirling movement of the glowing *agarbathi*. Stop the movement the golden circle is no more.

Again, the nature of a river is dependent upon the quality, quantity and direction of the water flowing in it. If the water is muddy, the river is muddy ; if the water is fast, the river is fast, and so on. Likewise, the thoughts are directly related to the mind and the mind to the man.

The quantity, quality and the direction of thoughts in the mind is determined by the peculiar sub-surface motivating factors found within the emotional profile of each of us. These are called the *Vasanas*, represented in the diagram by the letter "V". When we are conscious of their pull, and when we realize that they are (at least some of them) conditioning us and dragging us into incompetence and into futile mental and physical dissipations, we call them " mental hang-ups " All of us have many such " hook-ups " and we struggle in vain against them and ultimately, in our weariness, we come to yield to them.

The force that drives the mind to whip and herd the sense-organs into the cess-pool of sense objects is the intellect with its various "*schemes for happiness*" called *desires* (*Raga*) These desires gurgling up in the intellect, poisoning the entier personality, are themselves manifestations of the ultimate source of all conditionings, the motivating urges deep in the " unconscious " in man, called the *Vasanas*. This level of our personality is called by the *Rishis* as the " Causal Body ", because it is the final determining factor that orders the type of mind and intellect

(the "Subtle Body") and all behaviour at the physical, mental and intellectual levels.

There is a great difference between man and man in facing life and its challenges. A thick-set robust man, a mountain of flesh and bones, may be a coward ; on the other hand, a lean and thin person may be a gallant little fellow. The real difference between the two is in the difference in their reactions to the challenges of life. Life can bring forth laughter from some, but only sobs from others. Some feel submerged in the ocean of life, while others keep afloat gracefully. Some take fright and would fain run away from life, while others embrace it joyfully. For some people life is a burden ; to others it is an opportunity. Some feel elated or depressed at the bits of life lived separately in meaningless patches ; others sense a unity in the apparent diversities. Verily for some, life is an edifying sun ; for others, it is a disgusting mess of profitless dream. Wherefrom springs these varied behaviours ?

We all know that a particular gramaphone record plays a particular song because of the distinct pattern of etching on it. The difference between two records, made of the same material and of the same size and shape is in the difference between the etchings on them. We may call a record good or bad, appreciate it or depreciate it, love it or hate it, all becaue of the etchings which guide the gramaphone needle. The synthetic material with which the records are made deserves neither blame nor praise. When pliable, it may take any pattern of etching the record manufacturer may choose to give it. A pleasant lilting tune or a mere boring noise, a moving lyric or a loathsome rubbish, a soul-stirring music or a sensuous ribaldry, may be recorded with equal ease. Once recorded and fixed, they become entombed and ressurected at will by the play of the needle. Etching forms the character of a record, its distinguishing marks and its reactions to the needle.

Similarly the structure and composition of the individual mind-and-intellect are founded upon his own *Vasanas* which primarily determine the type of reactions and responses emanating from his person. Thus when our *Vasanas* or tendencies are dynamic, our

thoughts and actions are dynamic and productive, but when they are dull and inert, our thoughts and actions are lifeless and unproductive.

The ancient *Rishis* in their studies observed that every action perpetrated is the fulfilment and culmination of a desire in an individual, while his desire is the gross manifestation of the subtler tendencies in him. Thus, when the nature of his tendencies is to speculate and gamble, he entertains a desire to do so. The desire, in the medium of such tendencies soon crystallizes in the form of a thought, and the thought helplessly draws him to the gambling houses or such other fields where his particular desire could be entertained. Man's tendencies or *Vasanas* are the prime-movers of all his desires and actions ; and so long as they last, desires keep effervescing in his bosom and they create mental agitations and discontentment which compel him to act and thus provide a channel for their exhaustion.

Thus, in the mechanism of human action, the propelling force behind our desires, thoughts and actions originates from our innate inclinations and tendencies, called by the term *Vasanas*. *Vasana* in Sanskrit means fragrance. Each individual has *Vasanas*, distinct and peculiar to him and they constitute and define his individuality. In other words, an individual is nothing but a substantial form of his *Vasanas*. The heterogeneous pattern of human beings is explained by the variety and difference in the texture of *Vasanas* composing them, and none is exempted from the hold of his own *Vasanas*. Therefore Krishna says in the *Geeta* :

> *** Even a wise man acts in accordance with his own nature; beings will follow their own nature; What can restraint do ?**

Even a man-of-knowledge acts in conformity with his own nature, which is determined by the pattern of thoughts that arise in him. At any given instant of time, all of us are determined by

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* सदृशं चेष्टते स्वस्याः प्रकृतेर्ज्ञानवानपि ।
प्रकृतिं यान्ति भूतानि निग्रहः किं करिष्यति ॥

(Ge. Ch. III — 33)

the thoughts that are in us at that moment, and the thoughts in us always get patternized by the channels of thinking, designed by the thoughts which we had entertained in the past. The nature of each individual is decided by the style of thinking which he is capable of, as conditioned by the past impressions or *Vasanas*.

Although many of us know that all actions are the attempts of the mental impressions to fulfill themselves in the outer world, only the Perfect-one realizes this truth and becomes unattached to all his activities and their results. The majority of us are in a state of complete delusion and are entirely victimised by our own mental temperaments. The dull-witted one, unconsciously victimised by his own mental impressions, acts in the world outside shackled by a thousand attachments. Such actions have a tendency to create new *Vasanas*, which again procreate impulses to act more vigorously.

This can be made clear by the example, how impressions are created in a camera. When the camera is loaded with a piece of plain paper, however long we may keep the lenses open against any well-lit object, no impression of the object concerned can be made on the paper ! On the other hand, if the very same sheet of paper is sensitive to light, then, even a slight exposure will leave the impression of the object upon it. Similarly, a mind sensitized with attachments soon gathers on to itself impressions (*Vasanas*) during its contacts with the external fields of activity.

Therefore the cause of *Vasanas* are egocentric "thoughts" and sensuous "actions". When the actions have manifested, they in their turn create more and more *Vasanas*. From *Vasanas* spring forth more actions again and again ; this endless chain of sorrows continues. Therefore Shankara says :

> * **Through the increase of *Vasanas* egocentirc "work" increases, and when there is an increase of egocentric "work" there is an increase of *Vasanas* also. Thus transmigration never comes to an end.**

* वासनावृद्धितः कार्यं कार्यवृद्ध्या च वासना।
वर्धते सर्वथा पुंसः संसारो न निवर्तते ॥

(V C — 313)

So far we have found that the entire personality-complex is maintained and run by the *Vasanas*, and the *Vasanas* are generated by our ego-centric contacts with the world-of-objects. In passionate hunger for sense-gratifications, when one's personality runs out in extroverted seeking and clinging to the joys of sense-objects, the sensuous *Vasanas* increase in one's personality composition. The more these sub-conscious urges and motivating factors in an individual, the more grow his desires, and the more becomes the devastating agitations of the mind. In such an individual the sense-organs cannot remain withdrwan and quiet. They must gallop on towards indulgence in the sense objects which in its turn creates more of such *Vasanas*.

This cause-effect chain is never ending. When this body becomes incapable of exhausting the *Vasanas* another body has to be taken up, and there also, man accumulates fresh *Vasanas* and moves on to yet another body ; this is called transmigration. According to *Vedanta* all our activities together with their reactions on the individual which causes transmigration are called *Karma*. *Karma* is of three types. It is calssified with reference to the past, present and future. The total impressions gained by an indivudal through his activities and thoughts accumulated at the unmanifest level of his personality are called *Sanchitam*, meaning accumalated.

> * **The effects of actions performed in millions of previous births and stored up in the form of seeds, which in their turn would give rise to endless crores of births—are called *Sanchita Karma* or accumulated *Karma*.**

We are the various " effects " arising from different " causes ". The " causes " being different, the " effects " are also different. Each one of our actions of the past has its own reaction, and thus each one of us must have a treasure-house of the entire past reactions. This is called the "*Sanchita Karma*". At the end of

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* अनन्तकोटिजन्मनां बीजभूतं सत् यत्कर्मजातं
पूर्वार्जितं तत् सञ्चितं ज्ञेयम् ॥

(Tat. Bdh.)

experiencing the " fruits " allotted for this life, on departing, each one takes the next form according to the pattern ordained by the ripened ones in our total *Sanchita Karma* called *Prarabdha Karma.*

> * **Having caused birth of this body, the *Karma* which gives results in this, very world, in the form of happiness or misery, and which can only be destroyed by enjoying or suffering them out, is called *Prarabdha Karma*; this *Prarabdha Karma* can be exhausted only by reaping or experiencing the fruits thereof.**

To explain it more clearly, suppose we have a piece of land divided into plots. In one, we plant coconut seeds, in the second, seeds of ladies-finger and in the third, mango seeds. In order to germinate, grow and yield fruit, each seed would take its own time. This is well known. Similarly, each of our actions has got its own time limit for its fruition. Every action has got its own reaction, but certain actions give their reactions immediately while others provide their reactions only after a long interval.

To enjoy or suffer the reactions of the past actions, each one of us needs certain joys and sorrows, and in order to generate these required experiences each one must have a definite " field " of one's own experiences—the world. Here the " world " means the special world in which each one lives one's own inner experiences even though the external world-of-objects remains the same for all. The differences in the individual experiences are all due to the presence of *Prarabdha Vasanas.*

> ****As long as there is the experience of happiness etc., the work of *Prarabdha* is seen to persist. Every result**

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* इदं शरीरमुत्पाद्य इह लोके एवं सुखदुःखादिप्रदं यत्कर्म
तत्प्रारब्धं भोगेन नष्टं भवति प्रारब्धकर्मणां भोगादेव क्षय इति ॥

(Tat. Bdh.)

** सुखाद्यनुभवो यावत्तावत्प्रारब्धमिष्यते ।
फलोदयः क्रियापूर्वो निष्क्रियो न हि कुत्रचित् ॥

(V C - 447)

is seen to have a preceeding action; there can be no result independent of action.

As long as there is perception of happiness, sorrow etc., *Sruti* acknowledges that *Prarabdha* persists. The logical reason for this is that without a cause an effect is impossible. We see everyone experiencing joys and sorrows. Therefore there must have been causes for them in the past. If all *Prarabdha* ends, then there cannot be any experience of joys, sorrows etc.

It is because of the *Prarabdha Vasanas* we express ourselves the way we do. This body is what it is, because of its *Prarabdha*. Because of our *Vasanas* we have taken this body. Today the body moves and acts expressing its powerful *Vasanas*, and sure it will drop down dead once the *Vasanas* are exhausted.

This "Law of *Karma*" is often misunderstood by many as the "Law of *Destiny*". But there is indeed a lot of difference between the "Law of *Karma*" and the "Law of *Destiny*". Had the Law of *Karma* been the same as the Law of *Destiny*, the Hindu civilization would have long ago ended like the Roman or the Egyptian civilizations. The Law of *Destiny* has a corroding effect upon the human heart, and in a short time it renders its followers to be mere ineffectual "lotus-eaters".

Some of us blame the Creator for all our misfortunes in life, and despair by saying "it is all our Fate". But all of us understand that there is a rhythm in the Universe, in that the planets "move" regularly, and the whole world of things and beings behave according to a definite pattern. Only when we come to our own life, we say "there is no rhythm and there is no logic or system in it".

Again, some people misunderstand the real meaning of *Prarabdha* when they take the word to mean all the failures, impotence and weakness in them. If we were to be guided by this delusion of the effect of *Prarabdha* in every act of ours then there is no room for self-improvement through self-effort. There are some who console themselves by saying that, "I have no faith or hope, and it is my *Prarabdha*". This is a defeatist

mentality, and so long as we entertain and live in this defeatist mentaity, we cannot expect any progress.

On the other hand, those who really understand and believe in the Law of *Karma* and live up to it, become a generation of spiritual giants and dynamic citizens. The Law of *Karma* is based upon the final conclusion that this life is not an end in itself, but is just one of the little incidents in the External Existence of each of us. Among us, each one is a type and has a life different from that of the other. The destiny of one is obviously different from that of the other. Had this been the very first and the last of our births, all of us should have a greater uniformity of experience in life.

Just for argument, let us suppose that we all have been just created afresh and pushed into this calamity called life, then we should not have had such dissimilar schemes of life of each ego living its own life of peculiar joys and woes. When we enquire into the cause for the great differences between individual experiences, we are driven to the conclusion that, this life in which we are living, is only one in a series of our incarnations. We must have had many incarnations in the past, and probably, many more will come to our lot in the future. From birth to death and from death to birth, the whirl goes on, but we do not appreciate it or understand it, because we are viewing life from a very circumscribed and limited point of view.

We think that life means the period spent by us between our birth and death, and what we see and experience around during this interval is life. Now suppose there is a large painting on a wall. In order to be able to see the entire picture, we have to step back to some distance, and only then can we get the entire view, the rhythm of the colours, the beauty of the curves etc. Similarly, when life is viewed from its nearer perspective, we feel that it is illogical, unrhythmic etc. ; in detachment we will have to move away from our present life to get the correct view of the whole life and understand it as such.

The right way of looking at life, for coming to a correct conclusion, is by reviewing life in the concept of time-flow, wherein

the *future*, through the present, is ever becoming the past. Anything that is now in the future must in time arrive to become the present, and ere long, should pass on to become the past.

From the seed the tree emerges ; the seed is the cause, and the tree is the effect From cotton the cloth is made ; cotton is the cause, and cloth .is the effect. Now, in all conceivable examples the *cause* is, like the father of a child, *anterior*, and the *effect*, like the child, *posterior*, with reference to time ; father was *in* existence before the son is born. Cause is thus that which was, and the effect is that which is. The past causes the present ; the present will therefore cause the future.

The Law of Destiny does not take into account the above mentioned " cause " and " effect " relationship and explain to us how, even while we live the preordained and *Prarabdha* controlled pattern of circumstances, we can have in the immediate moments a limited freedom to create afresh. This idea is not explained in the Law of Destiny. So it shatters our morale, and a soul-killing defeatist mentality overpowers us to choke us. It takes away the fire, the enthusiasm, the grit in man and makes him a dull inactive individual, a mere dumb animal.

But, that we have been given by the Divine Law a limited freedom is the truth. For example. we cannot bend a piece of iron rail as it is ; but supposing this rail-piece is beaten out and made into a chain, the rail-matter then becomes easily pliable. Similarly, a cow is tied with a rope in the centre of a pasture land ; she is no doubt not free to graze the entire field, but she can move freely within a circle with a radius equal to the length of the rope. Similarly, though man has taken up his body to live a fixed *Prarabdha*, he can reach the supreme Goal of Life, the Unlimited Freedom, by living fully and correctly the limited freedom allowed to him from moment to moment.

Each moment of our life, we are not only living the fruits of the past actions, but are also creating some more for tomorrow Every moment we are consciously or unconsciously preparing ourselves for the lives yet to come. *Prarabdha* is caused by the actions done in the past. It is only the very self-effort of the

past. So, if our *Prarabdha* be a sorrowful one now, let us then do good acts today so that we can now determine or order a happier life for us in the future.

Thus the Law of *Karma* when correctly understood, is the greatest force of vitality in Indian Philosophy. It makes us the architects of our own future. We are not helpless pawns in the hands of a mighty tyrant—God, who, it is wrongly believed, has created us to be weak and tearful to lead our lives of limitations and pains. If we are weak or sorrowful, it is all because of our own wilful actions. In our ignorance we in the past had pursued certain negative values of life, and like a Frankenstein, their fruits have come up now to trouble us with the pattern of circumstances we are living today.

It is true no doubt that the egocentric desire-promted deliberate activities of the past leave behind their impressions, prompted by which (the *Vasanas*), the individualized ego seeks a conducive physical environment where it can fulfil its residual *Vasanas.* Hence the ego-centre dons an appropriate body and manifests itself under the required environments. Thus the body stems forth from the actions of the past, and since *Prarabdha* is the result of past actions, it can be conceeded that the body is the product of *Prarabdha.* Therefore, *Prarabdha*, belongs to the body. It is the destiny of the gross, subtle and causal bodies that they should suffer or enjoy and for this they should be in conducive environments or otherwise.

But there is no *Prarabdha* for the Real Self of the individual, as the Self is not a product of any past actions. Therefore for the one who has realized his perfect identity with the Supreme Infinite Self, there cannot be any *Prarabdha.* Therefore *Acharya* Sahankara says :

> * The body has been fashioned by *Prarabdha*, therefore one can accept that *Prarabdha* relates to the

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* कर्मणा निर्मितो देहः प्रारब्धं तस्य कल्प्यताम्।
नानादेरात्मनो युक्तं नैवात्मा कर्मनिर्मितः ॥

(V C – 459)

body. But it is not reasonable to attribute it to the Self, for the *Atman* is never the result of any earlier work.

*** The *Atman* is "Birthless, Eternal and Undecaying"—such is the explicit declaration of *Sruti*. How can *Prarabdha* be attributed to him who lives ever-identified with "That"?**

**** Only as long as one lives identified with one's body, can one accept the workings of *Prarabdha*. But no wise man accepts that a man of Realization ever identifies himself with his body. Hence, in his case, the workings of *Prarabdha* should be rejected.**

A man of Perfection is one who has ended his misconceptions and is therefore not identifying with his physical equipment any more. And since he does not identify himself with his physical body, the tragedies and comedies of the body will not affect him.

But this does not mean that the *Vasanas* which have started yielding fruits before the auspicious hour of Realization, will stop yielding fruits after Realization At some particular stage in his pilgrimage of life an individual may realize the Truth. Shankaracharya at the age of twelve, Vivekananda at Twenty-four and Buddha at forty-two, are some of the examples. But before Realization the individual had already been conceived in his mother's womb and had started his earthly career. The great pilgrimage that has started is, in itself, an expression of the past *Vasanas*. The *Karma* that has started manifesting, does not end because of *Jnana*. Because of its *Prarabdha*, the body continues to exist even after Realization The body has to go through all its experiences because of its past *Karma*.

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* अजो नित्यः शाश्वत इति ब्रूते श्रुतिरमोघवाक् ।
तदात्मना तिष्ठतोऽस्य कुतः प्रारब्धकल्पना ॥

(V C – 460)

** प्रारब्धं सिध्यति तदा यदा देहात्मना स्थितिः ।
देहात्मभावो नैवेष्टः प्रारब्धं त्यज्यतामतः ॥

(V C – 461)

of consciousness, irrespective of their merits or demerits, they cannot have any reaction after the individual wakes up. The good actions of the dream cannot give one iota of happiness after waking up nor can the crimes perpetrated in the dream give the consequent sorrows in the wakening state. Between two states of consciousness there cannot be any transaction, for the egoes that experience the two states of consciousness are totally different. The *waker* as the waker is not available in the dream, and the *dreamer* as the dreamer is not there to experience the waking-state.

In the same way the egocentric individuality must have performed innumerable actions in his pilgrimage from one form to another. Yet, now that the ego has ended, in his new-found experience of the Infinite Consciousness as his own true nature, none of the fruits of actions can ever affect him, because the doer of those actions is not available any more. In other words :

> *** With this realization "I am *Brahman*", the actions of a hundred crore cycles come to nought, like the actions in the dream on waking up.**

The idea that *Acharya* Shankara pin-points here is that there is a total destruction of all *Vasanas* that have been hoarded from the past, *Shanchita*, in the knowledge arising from the deep contemplation upon, " I am *Brahman* ". By this subjective Realization " I am the Supreme Consciousness " all the imprints of the past actions left on our personality get totally eradicated and completely erased. No more can the *Vasanas* accumulated in millions of past lives ever grow potent and manifest their influences on the personality of the individual who has realized Truth.

When the teacher says that all the *Vasanas* accumulated in the past are destroyed, it means not only all the *Sanchita Vasanas* are destroyed but also all the *Vasanas* that are to mature in future and yield their results, called *Agami Karma*, are also totally des-

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* अहं ब्रह्मेति विज्ञानात्कल्पकोटिशतार्जितम् ।
सञ्चितं विलयं याति प्रबोधात्स्वप्नकर्मवत् ॥

(V C – 448)

troyed. On realizing the Self which is unattached to the activities taking place, the seeker's contact with the past is so completely annihilated that even the immature *Vasanas* awaiting expression get totally roasted in the fire of Knowledge, newly kindled by the seeker's Realization.

> * **Being unattached and indifferent like the sky, one who is Realized is never concerned in the least about actions yet to be performed.**

When a man of Realization acts, he is not affected at all at any time by the *Vasanas* yet to mature in the future—the *Agami. Karma* is done by the ego and the ego alone can get its reward or punishment When the doer of the actions, the vain ego, has been totally sublimated, who is to receive the results ? When the ego is no more, the results of the *Karma* done by the ego cannot take effect and therefore no *Agami* can function.

However, the *Karmas* that have taken effect already, for the experience of which the body of the man of Realization has taken its birth ie., the *Prarabdha*, will continue to function and produce results. This body being the result of the *Prarabdha* continues to exist, even after Realization, till it exhausts itself by itself. Thus, the *Agami* and *Sanchita* can be eliminated, but not the *Prarabdha* ie., the *Prarabdha* of the body, not of the realized individual, for he lives in it wihout any identification with it. Summarizing *Acharya* Shankara says :

> ** ***Prarabdha*** **is very powerful even for the realized man and becomes nought only through the exhaustion of its fruits, while the** ***Sanchita*** **and** ***Agami*** **are**

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* स्वमसङ्गमुदासीनं परिज्ञाय नभो यथा।
न श्लिष्यति च यत्किञ्चित्कदाचिद्भाविकर्मभिः॥

(V C – 450)

** प्रारब्धं बलवत्तरं खलु विदां भोगेन तस्य क्षयः।
सम्यग्ज्ञानहुताशनेन विलयः प्राक्संचितागामिनाम्।
ब्रह्मात्मैक्यमवेक्ष्य तन्मयतया ये सर्वदा संस्थिता-
स्तेषां तन्त्रितयं नहि क्वचिदपि ब्रह्मैव ते निर्गुणम्॥

(V C – 454)

> **destroyed in the fire of perfect Knowledge. But none of these three affects those who have realized *Brahman* and always live identified with it. They are truly the transcendental *Brahman*.**

Prarabdha Karma is very strong even for those who have known Reality. The *Agami* and *Sanchita* can be ended by the experience of the Higher, but *Prarabdha* will end only when it has been lived through. Whether a person is a *Jnani* or an *ajnani*, he has to live through it. There is no escape. A *Jnani* may have a happy smile on his face, since he knows that he is not the equipments ; an *ajnani* unfortunately will make a long face, for he will not have even the strength to grin and bear his lot.

13

The Levels In Subjective Life

From what we discussed in the last chapter it is obvious that the quality and texture of the *Vasanas* in us determine the type of persons we are. As our *Vasanas*, the sub-surface motivating factors within the emotional profile in us, so are our thoughts ; and as our thoughts, so are our actions. It can be further observed that the quality and texture of the thoughts and actions of the same individual show different characteristics at different tmes, indicating the presence of different types of *Vasanas* in the individual.

Thus, when the *Vasanas* are low, utterly selfish and extremely ego-centric in nature, the thoughts are dull, gross and even animalistic, and naturally actions arising out of them can only be unintelligent, undignified, and meant only for the gratification of baser passions. When the *Vasanas* are slightly nobler, but are centred around the person's own selfish ego, extrmely passionate, supremely ambitious then they will produce a rougher pattern in the thoughts. The noblest of *Vasanas* bring the mind into a state of alert attention.

A scientific analysis of the psychological being in man thus reveals three thought-conditions under which the human mind functions. They are called in *Vedanta* as the *Sattwa*, the pure and noble, the *Rajas*, the passionate and agitated, and the *Tamas*, the dull and inactive states. Combinations of these three states of mind, in various permutations determine the individual personalities. In fact, the noble, ignoble or indifferent aspects in the character and conduct of persons are regulated according to the proportions in which these constitutuents are mixed.

These three *Gunas* have been described because there is no living organism in the world, totally free from the influence of these three *Gunas* ; no living creature can act or work beyond the frontiers provided by these three *Gunas*. Nature (*Prakriti*) itself is constituted of these *Gunas* ; the play of these three *Gunas* is the very expression of *Prakriti*. Therefore :

> * **There is no being on earth, or even in heaven among the "*Devas*" (heavenly beings), who is totally liberated from the three qualities born of *Prakriti* (matter).**

Every creative action owes its origin and progress to a tendency for it in the artist. When this tendency in him becomes vibrant with a part of the life in him, it becomes potential, and struggles to express itself in terms of ideas and feelings and later on gets expressed in the particular medium of art chosen by the artist. The infinite varieties of thoughts and ideas that arise in the bosom of the living kingdom have been observed and classified under three main moods, governed by which alone, the instruments of feeling, thinking and action come to play their parts everywhere. These three characteristics, the eternal moods of the "subtle-body", are called "Unactivity" (*Sattwa*), 'Activity" (*Rajas*) and "Inactivity" (*Tamas*).

No two creatures react to the world outside in the same fashion, because the proportion in which these three *Gunas* come to influence

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* न तदस्ति पृथिव्यां वा दिवि देवेषु वा पुनः।
सत्वं प्रकृतिजैर्युक्तं यदेभिः स्यात्त्रिभिर्गुणैः॥

(Ge. Ch. XVIII – 40)

each one, is different at different times. The world of *Vasanas*, of ideas, of thoughts and of actions together constituting the total Nature, is ever controlled and directed by the *Gunas* and therefore, the three *Gunas* are together called in *Vedanta* as *Maya*. Individuals differ from one another because of the different textures of the *Gunas* that predominantly rule over them ; it is this *Maya* that gives them their individuality. An individual cannot, at any time exist without all these three *Gunas*, whatever be their relative proportion.

It is indeed difficult to find an adequate rendering of the word "*Guna*" in English. The tradition of thought in the West has nothing equivalent to these terms, as the science of psychology in the West is even today passing through its very early childhood. The influence (*Gunas*) under which the thoughts function in each bosom, will be considered by it only when analytical and experimental psychology has exhausted its observations and study.

The concept of *Sattwa* in Indian Philosophy stands for perfect "purity" and luminosity, the opposite of "darkness" called "*Tamas*", and distinctly different from the "*dusty-colour*" of *Rajas*. We find in our literature that these *Gunas* are associated with light (*Sattwa*), red-colour (*Rajas*) and darkness (*Tamas*).

The term *Guna* also means "rope" by which the spiritual aspect of life in us is tied down to the inert and insentient matter-vestures. In short, *Gunas* are the three different influences under which every human mind has to play in such endless variety at different moments of its changing environments.

These *Gunas* are born of "Matter" produced by "Nature" ; they generate a feeling of attachment, and successfully delude the indwelling Self and chain It as it were, to the cycle of births-and-deaths, in a stream of constant change and pain. The *Gunas* have no separate existence as attributes inherent in a substance. All that we can say is that they are the many mental climates in which the mind behaves so differently from moment to moment, according to the given mood, governed by the predominating *Guna* at a particular moment of observation.

At this level of our discussion, any intelligent student might wonder whether these *Gunas* produce their effects or act at different times, each by turn. If they act all at one time, do they act in perfect concord, or in discord ? Naturally, the Lord, in His Divine Song, anticipates this doubt, and answers it in this stanza:

> *** Now *Sattwa* rises (prevails), O Bharata, having over-powered *Rajas* and *Tamas* ; now *Rajas* rises having over-powered *Sattwa* and inertia ; and now inertia (*Tamas*), rises having overpowered *Sattwa* and *Rajas*.**

This stanza clearly shows that at any given moment, a human personality, when analysed, can be found to work under the influence of one predominating *Guna*, while the other two *Gunas* are not totally absent, but are only of secondary importance When we say that one is under the influence of *Sattwa* it means *Rajas* and *Tamas* in him are, at the given moment, not quite prominent to contribute enough of their particular nature

Thus, when *Sattwa* predominates over *Rajas* and *Tamas*, it produces in the bosom at that time its own nature of happiness and knowledge. In the following stanza Lord Krishna gives us the symptoms produced by the predominant *Sattwa Guna* in an individual

> **** When through every gate (sense) in this body, the light-of-intelligence shines, it may be known that *Sattwa* is predominant.**

The apertures of the physical structure, through which the perceived world-of-objects enters us, are the windows of knowledge; the " sense-organs ". Through these holes, the Light-of-Awareness

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* रजस्तमश्चाभिभूय सत्त्वं भवति भारत ।
रजः सत्त्वं तमश्चैव तमः सत्त्वं रजस्तथा ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIV – 10)

** [illegible]ारेषु देहेऽस्मिन्प्रकाश उपजायते ।
[illegible] यदा तदा विद्याद्विवृद्धं सत्त्वमित्युत ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIV – 11)

goes out, *as it, were,* to illumine the various objects of the world. The knowledge in me pouring out through the eyes, becomes the power of vision and illumines for me all the forms and colours of the world. The same Eternal Awareness, through the ears, which cannot illumine form, brings within my comprehension the world-of-sound around me. So too the Divine Light-of-Cognition beaming out through the tongue illumines the taste and so on.

Thus, "seven tongues of flame" (five senses+mind+intellect) shoot out from the same Fire-of-knowledge, the Self, in us. Each beam of light, as it emerges from each window of the body, illumines one aspect of the world outside. It must be the experience of all that, while we are perceiving something, and efficiently illumining it, we are really in a state of *Sattwa* at that moment. If there be at that time *Rajas* and *Tamas* in us, our perception is hampered.

If the mind is agitated by *Rajas* and the intellect is veiled by *Tamas*, even ordinary simple perceptions become almost impossible. Thus, the more often and more completely we go beyond *Rajas* and *Tamas*, and thereby make our bosom full of *Sattwa*, the more grows our ability to observe, to analyse, to understand and to become aware of the world outside and judge it correctly.

It has already been explained that the instrument of knowing the world outside is the intellect, and the Consciousness reflected in the intellect is the light-of-intelligence by which we illumine the world of ideas, feelings and objects available in our life. The light of Consciousness reflected in the intellect is the beam of light that illumines the world-of-objects. The *Gunas* are the influences which determine the reflectiveness of the mind and intellect.

It is very well known that a clean and steady reflecting medium will reflect more efficiently than an unclean and unsteady surface. *Rajas* creates agitations and makes the intellect unsteady, *Tamas* creates veiling and makes the intellect unclean. Naturally, the greater the proportion of *Rajas* and *Tamas* in the bosom, the lesser will be its quota of intelligence. Therefore, it is quite logical to say that, at the moment of knowing and comprehending the world, one's bosom is surely in its pure *Sattwic* mood.

Sattwa is ever pure like clean water. But like water it can get mixed up with many things, but not as a compound of its own nature. Water as water is ever pure. When we say " dirty water ", we mean that the sample of pure water has something other than that in it. When we say stinking water, muddy water etc., we mean a specimen of pure water in which the stink and the mud are held in suspension. If the stink and dirt are removed, the water again becomes pure. Similarly, *Sattwa* is always present, even in a *Tamasic* man.

> * **Pure *Sattwa* is like clean water, yet in combination with *Rajas* and *Tamas* it provides for transmigration. But when the light of the Self gets reflected in *Sattwa* alone, then, like the Sun, It reveals the entire world of matter.**

When there is pure *Sattwa*, the intellect works steadily. There is no veiling and there are no agitations. The mind then becomes steady in single-pointed meditation. It is then face to face with Divinity, with Reality.

When this *Sattwic* mind is veiled by *Tamas* and disturbed by *Rajas*, the mind starts seeing things other than Reality. The body, mind and intellect turned towards objects, emotions and thoughts create *Vasanas*. To exhaust these *Vasanas* fresh bodies have to be taken up. This going and coming (*Samsar*) of the individuality from one equipment to another, from one time to another, from one place to another, is called transmigration.

When *Rajas* and *Tamas* are mixed with *Sattwa*, there is little intelligence in the individual. But when *Rajas* and *Tamas* are reduced in one's personality, the proportion of *Sattwa* increases. The light of Consciousness reflected in the intellect becomes more and more clear. Thus, out of the stupid personality of today,

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* सत्त्वं विशुद्धं जलवत्तथापि
ताभ्यां मिलित्वा सरणाय कल्पते ।
यत्रात्मबिम्बः प्रतिबिम्बितः सन्
प्रकाशयत्यर्क इवाखिलं जडम् ॥

(V C – 117)

a great brilliance of intelligence can be produced tomorrow when the personality gets purified.

Upasana, Japa, Meditation and other such spiritual disciplines are all meant for the purification of the personality. When the mind becomes more and more *Sattwic*, it starts apprehending things it could not have apprehended before. By such spiritual practices the mind becomes calm, and the clarity of the light of Consciousness reflecting in the intellect becomes more and more. Man's devotion to the Higher and his burning aspiration for liberation becomes greater and greater and noble virtues come to shine forth in him.

As a result, one's ability to apprehend things increases. This extra-brilliant faculty is called INTUITION. In Sanskrit it is called *Jnana-chakshu*, otherwise called the power of Divine Vision, or Revelation—Trans-experience. All these indicate a mind in a fully *Sattwic* condition. The whole process is like an ascending spiral; it gathers momentum and carries itself.

Consciousness being the same in all beings, the intelligence of individuals differs on account of the proportion of *Rajas* and *Tamas* functioning in their personality. Therefore what are the characteristics of *Sattwa* mixed with a little of *Rajas* and *Tamas* in the personality of the individual is being explained in the following stanza:

> *** The characteristic of mixed *Sattwa* are, utter absence of pride, presence of *Niyama* and *Yama* etc., and also faith, devotion, yearning for liberation, the divine tendencies and a natural turning from everything unreal.**

All the qualities of a fit spiritual student (*Adhikari*) are present in such an individual. The qualities leading to supreme good, ie.,

* मिश्रस्य सत्त्वस्य भवन्ति धर्मा-
स्त्वमानितात्या नियमा यमाद्याः ।
श्रद्धा च भक्तिश्च मुमुक्षुता च
दैवी च सम्पत्तिरसन्निवृत्तिः ॥

(V C - 118)

absence of pride etc., qualities that add tempo to the spiritual practices such as *Yama*, *Niyama* etc., and the six fold spiritual wealth consisting of *Shama, Dama* etc., with sufficient devotion to the ideal, are all the indications of mixed *Sattwaguna*, where *Rajas* and *Tamas* are less and *Sattwa* is preponderant.

When the last traces of dirt (*Rajas* and *Tamas*) are removed, the personality becomes pure. Such an inner equipment is full of uncontaminated *Sattwa*. When such a state is attained, the aspirant realizes the Supreme Self and gains everlasting Bliss. It is everlasting because having gained this stage, no sorrow can ever affect the person. Some of the traits of this transcendental state of experience are indicated by some very choice expressions by *Acharya* Shankara in the following verse :

> * **The characteristics of pure *Sattwa* are cheerfulness, the experience of one's own Self, supreme Peace, contentment, Bliss, and constant devotion to the Supreme Self, by which the aspirant comes to enjoy everlasting Bliss.**

Rajas, the cause for all misapprehensions and *Tamas*, the cause for non-apprehension are totally absent in pure *Sattwa*. Therefore, the Self is apprehended when the intellect becomes immaculately pure. Since there is no *Rajas* (the cause for all agitations) in that spiritual state of Divine experience, when the Self is apprehended, all agitations end. Hence there can only be perfect Peace.

Because of the absence of all desires, the seeker feels, in that state, a sense of supreme contentment. Presence of desire is the indication of a sense of incompleteness. Attainment of perfect Peace, must end all sense of incompleteness. This is the state of Desirelessness, the state of Perfection and Bliss (*Prakasa*). This

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* विशुध्दसत्त्वस्य गुणाः प्रसादः
स्वात्मानुभूतिः परमा प्रशान्तिः ।
तृप्तिः प्रहर्षः परमात्मनिष्ठा
यया सदानन्दरसं समृच्छति ॥

(V C – 119)

is not a bliss of ignorance, but a dynamic Bliss of Realization. This Bliss springs from a source which transcends all our concept of joys and sorrows which ooze out from the filthy marsh-lands of our minds.

Because of non-apprehension of Reality, our individuality is entirely engaged in seeking its joys among the objects, emotions and thoughts through the equipments of the body, mind and intellect. When these equipments are transcended, the objective and subjective world are no more. When the *Vasanas* of *Rajas* and *Tamas* are removed, the ego rediscovers itself as the Supreme Reality and becomes one with it. Thereafter there is no slipping back into the state of body-identification ; unwavering, steady and deep devotion to the Supreme becomes natural to such a seeker. Thus, by making the intellect completely pure, the aspirant enjoys the essence of everlasting Bliss. Whereas :

> *** Greed, enterprise, initiating actions, restlessness, longing—these arise when *Rajas* is predominant, O best of the Bharatha family.**

Enumerating the type of thoughts and motives that rise up in the mind in which *Rajas* predominates, Lord Krishna lists the *following as the most important : (i) GREED is the inexhaustible* desire to appropriate the property of another, an appetite which has the tendency of growing more and more as we go on satisfying it. (ii) The term ENTERPRISE is here used to indicate all activities motivated by extreme egoism, undertaken with the intention to fulfil and satisfy the ego-centric, and therefore, the selfish desires. (iii) RESTLESSNESS is another type of experience that is lived through by a *Rajasic* personality. Because of restlessness, the individual fails to enjoy quietitude. (iv) The term LONGING is defined here by Sri Shankaracharya as " giving vent to pleasure attachment etc. "

To a large extent these four are inter-connected, and each

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* लोभः प्रवृत्तिरारम्भः कर्मणामशमः स्पृहा ।
रजस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे भरतर्षभ ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIV – 12)

successive one can be seen to have risen from the previous tendency. Greed must make the greedy very active indeed, and, when an activity motivated by greed is undertaken, it expresses in selfish, activities, and once a man enters such a field of selfish activities, in his anxiety for the results, he creates a set of unhealthy circumstances around him and gets dragged toward their centre, where he is led to perpetuate more and more cruelties, base immoralities and heinous crimes, and his inward quietude gets completely shattered. He experiences extreme unrest. Naturally, one who is in this condition of mind, sweating and labouring in the outer fields, with a heart poisoned by *Rajas*, must come under the sway of endless longing for deeds not yet accomplished, for objects not yet acquired and for profits not yet gained.

In short, under the contagion of *Rajas*, the psychological being in us gets extremely persecuted by its own restlessness which gets expressed in its endless plans, agonising desires, painful longings, maddening greed and oppressive restlessness and exhausting actions. When such an individual works in society, his sorrow do not rest with himself; they spread like contagion to thousands around him.

Objectively, all actions arise out of *Rajoguna* aspect of *Maya*. Reactions arising subjectively in the human personality due to *Rajasic* activities are further explained in the following verse from *Vivekachoodamani* :

> * **Desire, anger, greed, hypocricy, arrogance, jealousy, egoism, envy, etc., — these are the dreadful attributes of *Rajas*, from which extreme worldly tendencies of man are produced. *Rajas* is therefore the cause for bondage in life.**

These are the lower types of emotions created by *Rajoguna*

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* कामः क्रोधो लोभदम्भाद्यसूयाऽ
हंकारेर्ष्यामत्सराद्यास्तु घोराः ।
धर्मा एते राजसः पुम्प्रवृत्ति-
र्यस्मादेषा तद्रजो बन्धहेतुः ॥

(V C –112)

in the psychological layer of the personality. These reactions created by the agitations of the mind are terrible, because they multiply the agitations and man gets totally shackled by them. Since all worldly activities arise from *Rajoguna*, it is said to be the cause for all bondages in life. Under the forces of *Rajas* man becomes limited by his own lower impulses.

Rajas generates agitations (*Vikshepa*), and these very agitations of the mind veil the Self in us. When a *Rajasic* man gets exhausted due to his own over-exertion, he gets tired and feels sleepy—a state when he is about to enter *Tamas*. The symptoms, when *Tamas* predominates, are explained below :

> *** Darkness, inertness, heedlessness and delusion—these arise when "TAMAS" is predominant, O descendant-of-Kuru.**

Dullness, inertness, heedlessness and delusion—these symptoms, according to the *Geeta*, can be recognized by an indidvidual in himself, when he is suffering from *Tamas*. Dullness (*Aprakash*) is the condition of the intellect when it is incapable of arriving at any decision ; it is a state when a sort of drowsiness veils the potentialities of one's intelligence and makes it impossible for one to discriminate between the right and the wrong. This condition is experienced everyday by everyone of us, as sleep overtakes us at night.

INACTION (*Apravrithi*), IDLENESS : The tendency to escape from all responsibilities, a sense of incapacity to undertake any endeavour and a lack of enthusiasm to strive for and achieve anything in the world, is the state of inaction explained herein. When *Tamas* predominates, all ambitions are sapped. Energy becomes dormant ; capacity is gone, and thereafter, eating and sleeping alone become the individual's main occupation of life.

The natural effect on the personality of a man who is living

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* अप्रकाशोऽप्रवृत्तिश्च प्रमादो मोह एव च ।
तमस्येतानि जायन्ते विवृद्धे कुरुनन्दन ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIV-13)

such a life is that, as an individual, he becomes heedless of the higher calls within himself. Nor can he be, in fact, a Ravana-like destructive criminal. Even to be bad, it needs a good deal of enthusiasm and an endless spirit of activity. He not only becomes incapable of responding to the good or bad in him, but also slowly sinks into delusion. He miscalculates the world around him, misinterprets his own possibilities, and always makes mistakes in determining his relationship with the world around. When thus an individual fails to understand rightly himself, the world outside, and his own right relationship with the world around him, his life becomes miserable and his very existence, a sad mistake.

> *** Ignorance, laziness, dullenss, sleep, inadvertence, stupidity, etc., are the attributes of *Tamas*. One tied up with these cannot comprehend anything, but remains like one asleep, or like a stump of wood or a block of stone.**

When one is under the influence of *Tamoguna*, the above qualities are found in him. These defects in the functioning of the personality-layers in us are like parasitic growths on the intellect, which make it dull and inert. A man with such a maladjusted intellect, moves in the world as though asleep and lives like an inert telegraph post, a stone pillar or an insentient statue.

Tamas is connected with : (1) absence of right judgement (*Abhavana*), (2) contrary judgement (*Vipareeta bhavana*), (3) want of definite belief in the existence of a thing, even though there might be a vague notion of it (*Asambhavana*), and (4) doubt (*Vipratipatti*). As long as there is *Tamas*, these will be present. They are all effects of the influence of *Tamas* on one's personality. When the intellect is thus veiled by *Tamas*, *Rajas* comes in to play its pranks ; then the mind starts projecting ceaselessly, and the individual suffers.

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* अज्ञानमालस्यजडत्वनिद्रा-
प्रमादमूढत्वमुखास्तमोगुणाः ।
एतैः प्रयुक्तो नहि वेत्ति किंचि-
न्निद्रालुवत्स्तम्भवदेव तिष्ठति ॥

(V C - 116)

> * Absence of correct judgement, or presence of contrary judgement, lack of definite belief, and doubt—these certainly never leave one who has any connection with this veiling power; also the projecting power gives endless trouble.

Even a man who is very clever, exceedingly capable of seeing the subtle meanings of things, and endowed with great intelligence and genius, is overpowered by the influence of *Tamas* and becomes incapable of understanding Reality though it is clearly explained in different ways, with many references and examples. Not only does he not understand Truth, but also he insists that what has been falsely projected by him alone is real. Even after a deep study of all the *Upanishads*, he says that the existence of the body, mind and intellect and their activities of perceiving, feeling and thinking constitute the only Reality. His intellect cannot comprehend the Truth because of the thickness of *Tamas* that has come over it. By insisting upon his projections alone as Truth he becomes victimized by their properties. When the properties of his projected misconceptions change, he too changes. When the body is ill, he says "I am ill". If the mind is worried, he complains, "I am worried". Thus the *Gunas* of the body, mind and intellect become his *Gunas*. Alas ! this endless *Tamas* is very powerful.

> ** Even the wise and the learned, and those who are proficient in the vision of the supremely subtle meaning of the scriptures, are over-powered by *Tamas* and cannot comprehend Truth, even though It is clearly explained in various ways. They consider as real what is simply super-imposed by delusion and

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* अभावना वा विपरीतभावनाऽ-
संभावना विप्रतिपत्तिरस्याः ।
संसर्गयुक्तं न विमुञ्चति ध्रुवं
विक्षेपशक्तिः क्षपयत्यजस्रम् ॥ (V C – 115)

** प्रज्ञावानपि पण्डितोऽपि चतुरोऽप्यत्यन्तसूक्ष्मार्थदृग्-
व्यालीढस्तमसा न वेत्ति बहुधा संबोधितोऽपि स्फुटम् ।
भ्रान्त्यारोपितमेव साधु कलयत्यालम्बते तद्गुणान्
हन्तासौ प्रबला दुरन्ततमसः शक्तिर्महत्यावृतिः ॥ (V C – 114)

attach themselves to its effects. Alas ! how powerful is the veiling power of dire *Tamas*.

The *Tamasic* aspect of *Maya* has such a mighty power, that even a brilliant intellect, when under the influence of *Tamas*, cannot understand Reality though it is pointed out in a thousand clear ways by the *Shastras*. Under the influence of *Tamas* man's intellectual ability to discriminate between the right and the wrong gets veiled and he starts acting as if under some hallucination or stupefaction. There is no consistency of purpose, brilliance of thought, tenderness of emotion or nobility of action in an individual who comes under the contamination of *Tamoguna* influences. In short, *Tamas* in the human personality binds it to its lower nature by providing it with endless misconceptions and miscomprehensions of the true divine purpose of life. It naturally forces one in that condition to live in indolence, heedless of the higher purposes. One thereafter lives ever blind to the nobler and diviner aspirations of life. Therefore Lord Krishna says:

*** Know thou that *Tamas* is born of ignorance, deluding all embodied beings and binds fast, O Bharata, by heedlessness, indolence and sleep.**

If *Tamoguna* thus binds us with our attachments to indolence and sleep, *Rajoguna* also binds the Infinite Self in us to matter-vestures and makes It play the part of a limited being through an endless array of inexhaustible actions. Though the self is not an agent, *Rajas* makes It act with the idea " I am the doer ".

**** Know thou that " *Rajas*" (is) of the nature of passion, the source of longing and attachment ; it binds fast, O Kauntheya, the embodied one by attachment to action.**

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* तमस्त्वज्ञानजं विद्धि मोहनं सर्वदेहिनाम् ।
प्रमादालस्यनिद्राभिस्तन्निबध्नाति भारत ॥ (Ge. Ch. XIV–8)

** रजो रागात्मकं विद्धि तृष्णासङ्गसमुद्भवम् ।
तन्निबध्नाति कौन्तेय कर्मसङ्गेन देहिनम् ॥ (Ge. Ch. XIV–7)

When there is an onslaught of *Rajoguna* influences in the bosom, man's mind is wrecked with a hundred painful passions. Passions are the symptoms of the working of *Rajoguna* in the psychological field. Passion expresses itself in a million different urges, disires, emotions and feelings; yet all of them fall under two distinct categories: desires and attachments. Thus in the *Geeta* Lord Krishna mentions these two as the very sources from which all passions arise.

Actions are born of passions. Passions arise from desires and attachments. Just as a thirsty man would struggle and suffer, wanting nothing but water to relieve his pangs, so too, a human personality thirsts for the statisfaction of every desire that burns within. Once the desire is fulfilled, a sense of attachment comes like a vicious passion to smother down all the peace and joy of the mind. "Desire" is our mental relationship towards objects which have not been acquired by us and "attachment" is the mental slavishness binding us to the objects so acquired.

All these are symptoms of the *Rajoguna* influences upon our mind. When once an individual has come under the influence of *Rajas*, he expresses innumerable desires and gets bound in his own attachments; he lives on in the world manifesting a variety of passions. Such a passionate being, goaded by his desires for things not yet acquired, and crushed under the weight of responsibility of his attachments to things that he possesses, can never keep quiet but must necessarily act on endlessly earning and spending, procuring and saving, protecting and procreating and yet thirsting for more and more. Anxious to have more and fearing to lose, he is whipped from action to action. Restlessly rushing, he becomes entangled in the joys of his successes, involved in the pangs of his failures and lives as an "embodied-one" chained by his own actions.

When the mind is purified from all its agitations (*Rajas*) the intellect is cleansed of its low passions and criminal lusts (*Tamas*), no doubt, the personality becomes purified, expressing a greater quantum of inner peace and happiness and enjoys the greater benefit of subtler understanding and intellectaul comprehension.

If the mind is clean and the intellect is steady, a more efficient intelligence is manifested. Thus, whenever the mind is in an inspiring and creative mood, it is capable of taking long flights into the realms of wisdom. On all such occasions of vast knowing and deep understanding, the inner equipment is under the influence of *Sattwa*, wherein the agitations created by *Rajas*, and the dullness created by *Tamas* do not express themselves.

And yet, *Sattwa* also binds the Infinite to matter through the attachment to " knowledge " and " Happiness ".

> * **Of these (the three *Gunas*), *Sattwa* which, because of its stainlessness, is luminous and healthy, binds by attachment to " happiness " and to " knowledge ", O sinless one.**

When one has experienced the thrilling joy of creative thinking and the inspiring life of goodness and wisdom, one gets attached to them. Such a one will thereafter sacrifice anything in order to live constantly that subtle joy. A scientist working self-dedicatedly in his laboratory, a painter working at his canvas in his studio, pale with hunger and weak with fatigue, a poet hunted out from society, living in public parks, seeking his joys in his own visions and words, martyrs facing cruel persecutions, politicians suffering long years of exile, mountaineers embracing death, are all examples of how, having known the subtler thrills of a higher joy, when the bosom is inspired with *Sattwa*, the individual becomes as much bound with attachment to them as others to their own material joys and possessions. Therefore Lord Krishna says:

> ** **Purity, passion, and inertia—these " *Gunas* ", qualities born of *Prakriti* bind fast in the body, the Embodied, the Indestructible, O mighty-armed one.**

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* तत्र सत्त्वं निर्मलत्वात्प्रकाशकमनामयम् ।
सुखसङ्गेन बध्नाति ज्ञानसङ्गेन चानघ ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIV–6)

** सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति गुणाः प्रकृतिसंभवाः ।
निबध्नाति महाबाहो देहे देहिनमव्ययम् ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIV–5)

These *Gunas*, like cords as it were, bind the Spirit to matter and create in the Infinite Spirit the painful sense of limitations and sorrows. But in reality the Infinite and All-pervding Spirit can never be contaminated by the dreamy projections of a delusory world of matter. The ghost that emerges from the post cannot leave its marks on the post. Even after murdering a dozen people in the dream, the hands that were dripping with blood in the dream cannot, when he wakes up carry any blood stains. While dreaming, no doubt, the "dream world" of his own imaginations was quiet real to the dreamer. But, on waking, the waker in him cannot have any marks made on him in the dream. Similarly, the Eternal Life Principle, functioning in matter, gets as it were, bound to the limitations and finitude of matter, and this delusory experience is continued as long as the *Gunas* bind It to, and entangle It in matter.

The embodied-Self, though Indestructible and Infinite, in Its identifications and attachments with the body, feels the changes in the body as Its own changes. This delusion is maintained in every one of us, by the play of *Gunas* in us. Now it becomes evident how a clear understanding of what constitutes the *Gunas* and how they bind us to matter, will provide us surely with a charter of freedom, a scheme for getting ourselves freed from the tentacles of our own imaginations.

The thought developed so far has indeed painted a miserable picture of the Spirit in us, inescapably entangled in the three *Gunas*. To remove any such wrong idea that there is no escape for us from the entaglements of the *Gunas*, the Lord says:

> *** When the seer beholds no agent other than the *Gunas* and knows that which is higher than the *Gunas*, he attains to My Being.**

One who is standing in a running train is constantly on the move even though he is standing motionless. As long as he is

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* नान्यं गुणेभ्यः कर्तारं यदा द्रष्टानुपश्यति ।
गुणेभ्यश्च परं वेत्ति मद्भावं सोऽधिगच्छति ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIV–19)

travelling inside the train, the movement of the train is also his movement. But the moment he alights and stands on the platform, the train alone moves, and not he. So too, the Spirit identifying Itself with, and therefore riding on the *mind-intellect-equipment*, dances to the moods of the mind determined by the three *Gunas*. Therefore, to stand apart from the mind-intellect by ending all our identifications with it, is to get complete freedom from the thraldom of our thought-entanglements.

This technique of disentangling ourselves from our own thought-processes within, is the very act of meditation. A meditator, who is capable of doing so, will behold or experience subjectively the state of Pure Self uncontaminated by the dance of the thoughts. Such an experiencer of the Self not only realizes himself to be the Infinite but also understands that his ego, which was previously claiming to be the agent in all activities, is none other than the reflection of the Self in the *Gunas*.

Gunas govern and direct the entire thought-life at all times in everyone of us, and therefore they are the very substance out of which the mind-intellect equipment is made of. Being the by-product of inert matter, the mind-intellect equipment cannot function of its own accord, Consciousness which functions in and through the mind, making it brilliant and dynamic, must therefore be a principle that is other than the mind. He, who has thus understood that he is not " the reflection in his own mind " but that which is reflected therein, something *other than the mind* and therefore something higher than the *Gunas*—is the one who has escaped for ever the shackles of all limitations, the tears of all sorrows and the sighs of all disappointments—the state of " My Being ". What the characteristics of such an individual are, who has crossed over the entanglements of the *Gunas* and attained to the state of " My Being ", is being explained by Lord Krishna in the following stanza:

> *** Illumination, activity and delusion—when these are present, O *Pandava*, he hates them not, nor longs for them when they are absent.**

The three terms "Illumination", "Activity" and "Delusion" ndicate the effects of their respective causes—the predominance f "*Sattwa*" of "*Rajas*" and of "*Tamas*". Their presence vithin him, does not create in him either any particular aversion r any special attachment. Even when his mind and intellect re under the influence of *Rajas* and *Tamas*, so that he feels agi-ated or deluded, he is not in the least affected by them, and there-ore, he hates them not. It is only in the absence of Self-Knowledge hat one hates them.

Not only has he no particular attachment for them, but also e is not at all worried by their absence, because he has risen bove these three *Gunas*, and they together or severally have nothing o offer him which he has not already gained ! Suppose a millio-aire by chance comes across a 25 paise coin lying on a road-side; e may stoop down and pick it up, but he would never congratu-ate himself for it as a poor man would do under the same circum-tances. He who has extricated himself from the entanglements of the *Gunas*, has transcended fully the equipments of the mind nd intellect and lives in the infinite subtle Joy of the Self. To im the ordinary vehicles of joys and sorrows are no more impor-ant. Ever steady and balanced, he lives beyond the storms and louds of agitations in a realm of continuous joy and peace.

Therefore in all his experiences in the world—good, bad or ndifferent—he is unconcerned, since he knows that it is only he play of the mind and intellect. In the cinema hall, the tragedies and comedies on the screen need not affect us, if we remember hat it is only a show put up for our entertainment. This does not mean that the seer is totally unconcerned with the happenings of the world But, that Man-of-Perfection looks at all that is happening around him "as though unconcerned", that is to say, he is not in the least agitated, nor does he become hysterical by anything that is happening around him in life.

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* प्रकाशं च प्रवृत्ति च मोहमेव च पाण्डव।
न द्वेषि संप्रवृत्तानि न निवृत्तानि काङ्क्षति ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIV-22)

> * Seated like one unconcerned, he is not moved by the "*Gunas*", who, knowing that the *Gunas* operate, is self-possessed and swerves not.

In order to watch the play of the three *Gunas* in himself, he should be an observer far above the *Gunas*. When he is established in his Pure spiritual Nature, he is able to observe detachedly and enjoy the play of the *Gunas* in himself and in the world around him. The Man-of-Wisdom, awakened to the Spiritual Consciousness swerves not from his consummate equillibrium when he witnesses the play of the *Gunas* in himself, and ever remains established in his own Divine Nature. He understands that the changes in his own inward personality are all nothing but the kaleidoscopic changes of the *Gunas*, and that the world outside changes according to one's mental conditions. A man of true Wisdom lives ever in a state of complete equipoise, fully aware of the mechanism behind the changes in himself and in the world around him.

But to the average man, this state of equipoise may look like complete death. No doubt, in a sense, it is so; it is the death of the limited finite life of relative experiences liked by the baser ego, always disturbed by the constant storms of love and hate, likes and dislikes. To withdraw therefore from this chaotic field of desires and attachments into the shelter of the Self, is to realize the diviner possibilities in ourselves. One who has thus gone beyond the shackles of the three *Gunas*, has awakened from all the misconceptions of the world, fed by the "I"-ness and the "My"-ness. In that state of godly awakening there cannot be any false relationships with the experiences of the world, whether they be joys or sorrows, things dear or loathsome and blames or praises. In all the experiences he is balanced, unattached and a mere witness.

> ** He who dwells in the Self is alike in pleasure and pain; to him a clod of earth, a precious stone and gold

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* उदासीनवदासीनो गुणैर्यो न विचाल्यते ।
गुणा वर्तन्त इत्येव योऽवतिष्ठति नेङ्गते ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIV-23)

are alike; to him the dear and the non-dear are the same; he is firmly the same in censure and self-praise.

To come in contact with the outside world through sense perceptions, to evaluate it in terms of similar experiences of the past and to experience pleasure or pain, is a trick played on us by our own individual personality. A stream of stimuli marches into us and we respond to the stimuli. These responses fall under two categories; pleasure and pain. That which is pleasurable to one may be painful to another. If the things of the world were in their own nature either pleasurable or painful, they would have certainly caused the same uniform reactions in all of us. But the things of the world do not produce in everyone the same reactions and therefore they are only interpretations of our mind and intellect, coloured by our past experiences. He who is not looking at the world through coloured goggles of the mind and intellect, will be the same in pleasure and pain.

But the average man, plunged in the identification with his own mind and intellect, suffers the world and interprets it as agreeable or disagreeable. In his relationship with things and beings, when they are of an agreeable nature, he comes to love them dearly, while, whenever they are of a disagreeable nature, he hates them. Those which seem agreeable, he likes to possess and hoard, but not those which seem disagreeable to him. But to an awakened Man of Wisdom, all these possessions and relationships are one and the same, and from his estimation none of them have any real value.

Children collect peacock feathers, shells, marbles, old stamps, shapely stones, etc., from the roadside or from the waste-paper baskets, with extreme possessiveness and keep them as their precious possessions. But as they grow up they throw them all away without any regret, but the younger ones in the family accept them with gratitude as a precious inheritance from the elders. Similarly, a man living his ego-centric life of desires for possessions,

** समदुःखसुखः स्वस्थः समलोष्टाश्मकाञ्चनः ।।
तुल्यप्रियाप्रियो धीरस्तुल्यनिन्दात्मसंस्तुतिः ।

(Ge. Ch. XIV-24)

may value gold and precious stones; but to an Awakened Soul, in his sense of Infinitude these limited possessions, hugged on to by lesser minds, have no charm at all. A man who has transcended the influence of the *Gunas* behaves the same in censure or praise. This sense of equanimity in honour and dishonour is one of the definite signs of perfection attained.

> * **The same in honour and dishonour, the same to friend and foe, abandoning the sense of enterprise—he is said to have crossed beyond the *Gunas*.**

Even in ordinary life, we have found martyrs courting what others consider as dishonour. They energetically love and serve their generation inspite of the insults and disgrace piled upon them by ignorant people. Honour and dishonour are the evaluations of the intellect that change from time to time and from place to place. To one who has transcended the ordinary planes of egoism and vanity, both are the same; a crown of thorns is as welcome as a crown of roses !!

To such a one who has risen above honour and dishonour, sorrows and joys, pleasure and pain, there is no foe in the world; nor is he attached to anyone in earthly friendship. My right hand is never a foe to me, nor is it merely a friend, it is myself. Another, other than myself, alone can claim enmity or friendship with me. When I have realized the *Oneness* of my spiritual nature, unconditioned by the *Gunas*, I have no more any special relationship with the world of things and beings outside; I live my vivid personal experience: "*They are I*".

Such a man of inner tranquillity, living in Self-Consciousness, has no more an ego in him, nor is he pestered by the endless ego-centric desires which are the sorrows of life. Desire motivated activities undertaken with an anxiety to earn and to acquire, to possess and to hoard, to aggrandise and to claim ownership, are indicated by the term "enterprise". All these are possible only

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* मानापमानयोस्तुल्यस्तुल्यो मित्रारिपक्षयोः ।
सर्वारम्भपरित्यागी गुणातीतः स उच्यते ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIV-25)

when the ego is there. When the limited ego-sense has volatilized in the realization of the Infinite Self, all ego-motivated activities also end.

All actions are the gross expressions of the three *Gunas*. These three *Gunas* are the expressions of "ignorance" or Nescience, which constitutes the causal-body. They emerge from the causal-body to express themselves first as the subtle-body expressing as qualities of our thoughts and feelings and again as the gross-body to express themselves into good, bad or indifferent actions.

If the art in me is to be expressed, I need a canvas and brushes. If I am a musician, I need musical instruments and accompaniments to express my art. Each artist employs appropriate instruments to express himself or herself. A violin in the hands of a painter, and a brush with colour and canvas in the hands of a musician are both useless, because they are not the media of expression for them. Similarly, each gross body—plant, animal or man—is the exact instrument given for the full expression of its subtle-body. And the nature and the quality of the subtle-body are determined by the texture of the causal-body consisting of the *Gunas*.

It is therefore evident that those who have gone beyond the *Gunas*, are no more under the tragedies of the subtle and the causal bodies.

> * The embodied-one, having crossed beyond the three *Gunas*, out of which the body is evolved, is freed from birth, death, decay and pain and attains to Immortality.

Identifying ourselves with the *Gunas* and thus playing in the mental and intellectual zones, we suffer the imperfections and sorrows of an ordinary life. But when these are transcended, we shall no more be under the tyranny of these sorrows. Finitude, mortality, change and sorrow belong to matter and are not in the

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* गुणानेतानतीत्य त्रीन्देही देहसमुद्भवान् ।
जन्ममृत्युजरादुःखैर्विमुक्तोऽमृतमश्नुते ॥ (Ge. Ch. XIV-20)

Perfect Immortal Changeless Self.

Matter changes for ever and these are common to all bodies everywhere. These changes are birth, growth, decay, disease and death. These five stages are common to all. Each one is a packet of pain. But all these sorrows are only the sorrows of matter and not of the Consciousness that illumines them. Consciousness in us illumines the various changes in our matter-envelopments, but they do not appertain to the Spirit. Therefore he who has realized himself to be the Spirit, goes beyond all these sorrows.

Not only does the man of realization experience the absence of sorrows but also he lives the positive joy of perfection. In the deep-sleep a man in his sick bed forgets his pain; the disappointed one escapes his disappointment; the hungry one no more feels his hunger; and the sad is no longer sorrowful. But in all these cases the illness is not cured, the disappointment is not removed, the hunger is not satisfied and the sorrow is not mitigated. Sleep is only a temporary truce with the existing world of sorrows within. On waking up, the sorrows too return; but the state of Bliss experienced at the moment of realization of the Self is not a mere temporary cessation of sorrows of life, but is a vivid experience of the changeless Infinite Nature. Hence it is said here that one who experiences the state of Immortality becomes Immortal even while living in this very same embodiment.

14

Human Nature and Behaviour

The term *Guna,* used in the dialectics of *Vedanta* indicates not the " properties " of a material but the " attitude " with which the mind functions. The psychological being in everyone of us comes under the influence of three different " climatic conditions " prevalent in our bosom. These three, in different proportions, influence the metnal and intellectual calibre of every individual and these influences provide the distinct flavour in each personality. All three are always present in every bosom, but from man to man their proportion slightly differs and hence the distinct aroma in the character, conduct and behaviour of each individual.

The three *Gunas* function within each one of us, and therefore, each seeker must know the art of subjectively diagnosing them in himself. Diagnosing the disease in a patient is gnerally accomplished through the observation of symptoms manifest in the patient, and symptomatic treatment is one of the methods of medical treatment. Therefore, in this chapter, an elaborate study and classification of the human mechanism in action is made to indicate the preponderance of one or the other of the *Gunas* in an individual. A seeker who is sensitive enough to recognize the various influences

under which he is forced to function from time to time in the world outside, *will be able to discard all* wrong impulses, immoral tendencies, unethical urges and animal passions and keep himself safely balanced in righteous living, in self-control and in serene purity.

Many a seeker ends his brilliant and promising spiritual career because, on his way to self-perfection, he develops "engine trouble", and not knowing why he behaves in that peculiar manner, he gets victimised and suffers from the sorrows of his spiritual fall. If a man, totally ignorant of the behaviour and nature of the machine under the bonnet, were to drive a car wishing to make a long pilgrimage, he may not have a pleasant journey if and when the engine starts mis-behaving. On the other hand, if he be a knowledgeable driver, knowing the nature and behaviour of the engine, he can immediately stop the car, open the bonnet, readjust the machine and drive on towards the goal.

The various details given in this chapter after analysing and classifying the tendencies, urges, emotions, actions etc., are pointers that help each one to understand himself. They are so many "indicating instruments" on the "dash-board" of our bosom within, which can, by their indications, give us a true picture of the condition of the personality-mechanism working within us. Just as a driver of a car can understand the condition of the engine and the nature of its performance by watching the play of the "pointers" in the metres on the dashboard in front of him, so too, a seeker is asked to check up at the similar "pointers" within while driving his own personality vehicle towards the goal of self-perfection. With this purpose in view Lord Krishna describes in the following stanzas the details of the mechanism behind human action, performance and possible achievement.

> *** Knowledge, the known and the knower form the three-fold "impulses to action"; the organs, the action, the agent, form the three-fold "basis of action".**

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* ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं परिज्ञाता त्रिविधा कर्मचोदना।
करणं कर्म कर्तेति त्रिविधः कर्मसंग्रहः॥

(Ge. Ch. XVIII–18)

The "impulse to action", according to Krishna, is a threefold arrangement made up of "knowledge" (*Jnanam*), the "known" (*Jneyam*) and the "knower" (*Parijnatha*). These three are technically called in *Vedanta* as the "*Triputi*": indicating the "experiencer", the "experienced" and the resultant "experience" — the "knower" the "known", and the "knowledge". Without these three no "Karma" is ever possible, as all "impulses to act" and experience arise out of the play of these three. The *experiencer* playing in the field of the *experienced* gains to himself the various *experiences*, and these constitute the real contents of all actions.

The "impulse to action" can spring either from the "experiencer", in the form of desires, or from the "experienced" in the form of temptation, or from the "experience" in the form of similar memories of some past-enjoyments. Beyond these three there is no other "impulse to action" (*Karma Chodana*).

The "impulse to action", when it has arisen, must also find a field to act, and the "basis for action" (*Karma Sangraha*) is constituted of the "instruments", the "reaction" and the "agent" (the actor). The ego that is suffering from its desire is the one that enters the field of activity and assumes to itself the attitude "I am the actor". This sense of agency, expressed by the ego, can maintain itself only so long as it has got a vivid picture of the "fruit of action" which it wants to gain. Fruit, meaning the profit or the gain that is intended to be gained by the action, is indicated by the term "work" (*Karma*).

When a desirer, the agent, encouraged by his constant attraction towards a satisfying end, wants to achieve it, he must necessarily have the instruments of action (*Karanam*), these instruments include not only the organs-of-perception and action but also the inner equipment of the mind and intellect. It cannot be very difficult now for a student to understand that (1) an *agent* having a desire (2) maintaining in his mind a clear picture of the *end* or the goal (3) with all the necessary *instruments* to act thereupon, would be the sum of the total contents of any activity (*Karma Sangraha*). If any one of the above three items is absent, action cannot take place.

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Work no doubt is constituted of the three factors: the "Knowledge", the "action" and the "actor". When an actor, guided by his knowledge, acts in the world, no doubt, manifestation of work takes place. But underlying these three, are two factors which supply the fuel and the motive force in all sustained endeavours. They are "understanding" (*Buddhi*) and "fortitude" (*Dhriti*).

The former *Buddhi* or "understanding" means the intellectual capacity in the individual to grasp what is happening around. "Fortitude" (*Dhriti*) is the faculty of constantly keeping one idea in the mind and consistently working it out to its logical end; consistency of purpose and self application, without allowing oneself to be tossed about hither and thither like a dry leaf at the mercy of the fickle breeze, is called "fortitude". All actions are controlled and guided by our intellectual capacity of "understanding" and our faithful consistency of purpose, the "fortitude".

Thus having roughly indicated the three fold "impulses of action" and the three-fold "basis of action", and the very motive force in all activities, that which not only propels activity, but intelligently controls and directs it, Krishna continues to explain why different people act so differently in the different fields of activity. He divides each one of these factors into three categories of human nature, the good (*Sattwic*), the passionate (*Rajasic*) and the dull (*Tamasic*).

> *** "Knowledge", "action" and "actor" are declared in the Science of Temperaments (*Gunas*) to be of three kinds only, according to the distinctions of temperaments; hear them also duly.**

> **** Hear (you) the three fold division of "understanding" and "fortitude" (made) according to the (*Gunas*) qualities, as I declare them fully and severally, O Dhananjaya.**

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* ज्ञानं कर्म च कर्ता च त्रिधैव गुणभेदतः ।
प्रोच्यते गुणसंख्याने यथावच्छृणु तान्यपि ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVIII–19)

Guna is the preponderance of a given type of temperament *in one's inner nature; the human mind and the intellect* can function constantly, but they always come to function under the different " climatic conditions "within our mind. These varying climates of the mind are called the three *Gunas:* the good, the passionate, and the dull.

Under each of these temperaments the entire human personality behaves differently and naturally therefore, the permutations and combinations of the varieties make up the infinite types that are found in the world. Even within the range of one and the same personality we find different moods and behaviours at different periods of time, depending entirely upon the occasion, the type of situations, the nature of the problem and the kind of challenge the person is called upon to face.

Since the three *Gunas* come to influence the psychological life and the intellectual perception of all of us, the doer-personality in each one of us must also change its modes and temperaments according to the *preponderant Guna* that rules the bosom at any given period of time. Consequently the " ego " is classified into three kinds.

THE SATTWIC

> * An " agent " who is free from attachment, non-egoistic, endowed with firmness and enthusiasm, and unaffected by success and failure, is called pure (*Sattwic*).

A *Sattwic* " actor " is one who is free from attachment to any of his kith and kin (*muktha sangaha*) and is non-egoistic (*Anahamvadin*). He is one who has no clinging attachment to

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** बुद्धेर्भेदं धृतेश्चैव गुणतस्त्रिविधं शृणु ।
प्रोच्यमानमशेषेण पृथक्त्वेन धनंजय ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVIII-29)

* मुक्तसङ्गोऽनहंवादी धृत्युत्साहसमन्वितः ।
सिद्ध्यसिद्ध्योर्निर्विकारः कर्ता सात्त्विक उच्यते ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVIII-26)

the things and beings around, as he has no such false belief that the world outside will bring to him a desirable fulfilment of his existence. He sincerely feels that he has not done anything spectacular even when he has actually done the greatest good to mankind.

When such an individual, who has destroyed in himself his ego-sense and the consequent sense of attachment, works in the worldly fields of activities, he ever acts with firm resolution (*Dhriti*) and with extereme zeal (*Uthsaha*). The term "*Dhriti*" means "fortitude", the subtle faculty in man that makes him strive continuously towards a detrmined goal. When obstacles come in his way, it is his faculty of "*Dhriti*" that discovers for him more and more courage and enthusiasm to face them all and to continue striving towards the same determined goal. This persevering tendency to push oneself on to work until one reaches the halls of success, unmindful of the obstacles one might meet with on the path, is called "*Dhriti*". "*Uthsaha*" means untiring self-application with a dynamic enthusiasm on the path of achievement while pursuing success.

Lastly, a *Sattwic* "actor" is one who ever strives unperturbed both in success and in failure, both in pleasure and in pain. For example, take the case of a nurse in a hospital. She has no special attachment to patients; she has no vanity that she is curing the patients, because she knows that there is the doctor behind every successful cure She has the fortitude (*Dhrithi*) and enthusiasm (*Uthsaha*), or else she will not be continuing efficiently in her job. And lastly, she is not concerned with the success or failure, she does not feel proud when the patient walks out fully cured, nor does she moan for any patient that dies. She cannot afford such indulgence. She understands the hospital to be an island of success and failure, of births and deaths, and she is there only to serve.

An "actor" (or agent) of the above type is one who suffers least from the dissipation of his energies, and so he successfully manages to bring into the field of his actions the mighty total possibilities of a fully unfolded human personality. The *Sattwic* "agent" strives joyously in *Sattwic* "actions" guided by his *Sattwic* "knowledge". His is the most enduring success, and

the world of beings is benefited the most by the inexhaustible rewards of the love-labour of such human personalities.

A *Sattwic* action is best productive of peace within and harmony without in the field of activity and therefore, it is the purest of the three types of "actions". It is an obligatory action (*Niyatham*), a work that is undertaken for the sake of work itself, in an attitude that the work itself is worship. Such activities chasten the personality and they are ever performed in a spirit of inspiration. Inspired activities naturally excel the very excellence which the very actor or the doer is ordinarily capable of. Such an activity is always undertaken without any attachment (*Sanga-rahitham*) and without any anxiety for gaining any definite end. It is a dedicated activity and yet it is not motivated by either love or hatred.

> * An "action" which is ordained, which is free from attachment and which is done without love or hatred by one not desirous of any fruit, is declared to be *Sattwic* (Pure).

Summarizing, a *Sattwic-karma* is a human action performed without any attachment and not motivated either by likes (*Raaga*) of dislikes (*Dwesha*) and undertaken without any desire to enjoy the results there of. Action itself is its fulfilment; a *Sattwic* man acts because to remain without doing service is a choking death to him.

The missionary work undertaken by all sages and seers are examples to the point We too can recognize in us the same type of work which we unconsciously perform on some rare occasions. A typical example is an individual nurshing his own wounded limb. When say, your left toe hits against the furniture in the house and gets hurt, the entire body bends down to nurse it. Herein there is neither any extra love for the left leg nor any particular special attachment for the left leg as compared with the

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* नियतं सङ्गरहितमरागद्वेषतः कृतम् ।
अफलप्रेप्सुना कर्म यत्तत्सात्त्विकमुच्यते ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVIII-23)

other parts of the body. To an individual the whole body is himself, and all parts are eoually important. The individual pervades the whole body.

In the same way an individual with a *Sattwic* intellect that has recognized the All-pervading One, lives in the consciousness of the One Reality that permeates the whole universe, and therefore, to him the leper and the prince, the sick and the healthy, the rich and the poor are so many different parts of his own spiritual personality only.

This " knowledge " by which the One Imperishable Being is seen in all existences, is *Sattwic.* Though the forms constituted by the different body-mind-intellect equipments are all different in different living creatures, the *Sattwic* " knowledge " recognizes all of them as the expressions of one and the same Truth which is the Essence in all of them.

> * **That by which one sees the one indestructible Reality in all beings, undivided in the divided, know that " knowledge " as *Sattwic* (Pure):**

Just as an Electrical Engineer recognizes the *same* electricity flowing through all the bulbs, a goldsmith recognizes the *one* metal gold in all gold ornaments, and every one of us is aware of the *same* cotton in all cotton shirts, so also, the person who is aware of the screen upon which the play of life and the throbs of existence are projected as the changeless one, has the " knowledge " that is *Sattwic,*

Intellect has various functions—observing, analysing, classifying, willing, wishing, remembering and a host of others—and yet, we find that the one faculty that is essential to gain the *Sattwic* knowledge is the power of discrimination. Without discrimination, neither observation nor classification, neither understanding nor judgement, is ever possible. Essentially therefore, the func-

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* सर्वभूतेषु येनैकं भावमव्ययमीक्षते ।
अविभक्तं विभक्तेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि सात्त्विकम् ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVIII–20)

tion of the intellect is "discrimination" which is otherwise called the faculty of right "Understanding". Therefore, the intellect may be considered as having the best type of "understanding". (*Buddhi*) if it can readily discriminate between the beings and situations in any field of activity. Such a *Buddhi* is called *Sattwic* (Pure).

> * **That which knows the path of work and renunciation, what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, fear and fearlessness, bondage and liberation, that "understanding" is *Sattwic* (pure), O Partha.**

An "understanding", (*Buddhi*) which is capable of clearly discriminating between the *right* field of pursuit and the *wrong* field of false propositions is the highest type of "understanding". It must have the strength to encourage the individual to pursue the right path and also the heroism to dissuade him from all wrong fields of futile endeavour. In short, true "understanding" has got a ready ability to discriminate between actions that are to be pursued (*Pravrithi*) and actions that are to be shunned (*Nivrithi*).

An intellect that can discriminate between the true and the false types of work must also be able to function in judging correctly "*what is right and what is wrong*". Every moment we are called upon to decide what responses should be made to the flux of happenings and challenges that continuously take place around us. A *Sattwic Buddhi* always helps us to arrive at the correct judgement. A person in a fit of anger or with a wounded vanity suddenly resigns his job only to regret thereafter the folly of his hasty action. This is a case wherein his capacity to judge rightly was mutilated by his had temper or by his extreme sense of vanity at the moment, and there, he comes to regret.

Men of indiscrimination, in their false evaluation of the sense world, hug on to the delusory objects and things fearing nothing from them—"Fools rush in where angels fear to tread"—and

* प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च कार्याकार्ये भयाभये।
बन्धं मोक्षं च या वेत्ति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी॥

(Ge. Ch. XVIII]

yet, they hesitate to read and understand Philosophy, to strive for and experience the Infinite. A true intellect must have the right "understanding" to discriminate between what is to be feared and what is not to be feared (*Bhaya-Abhaya*). The classic example to illustrate this is strikingly brought out in Ramayana where we find that the invincible hero, Sri Ramachandra, with superhuman courage faces almost alone the mighty tyrant of Lanka to win his wife Sita back, while the very same warrior, Sri Rama, readily gives credence to the statement of an ordinary "*dhobi*" who accuses the very same Sita. This is an example of the best type of "understanding" which knows when to be fearless and when to be afraid.

If the "understanding" is clear, we can easily recognize the tendencies in our make-up that entangle the higher in us and curtail its fuller play (*Bhandham/Moksham*). To observe and analyse ourselves with the required detachment and critically evaluate our psychological behaviours and intellectual attitudes in life, is not easy for all; it is possible only for those who are endowed with a well-cultivated *Sattwic* "understanding". If we cultivate the *Sattwic* "understanding", it can not only diagnose for us the false values and wrong emotions that work in us, but also can ultimately teach us to know the processes of unwinding ourselves from the cruel *Vasanas* and also provide us with the consistency of purpose to regain our freedom from these subjective entanglements.

When one steadily controls one's mind and sense-organs and their activities, through single-pointed attention and faithful concentration upon a given point of contemplation, one is said to possess *Dhriti* of the *Sattwic* type. *Dhriti* is that power within ourselves by which we consistently see the picture of a goal that we want to achieve; and while striving towards it, *Dhriti* discovers for us the necessary consistency of purpose to pursue the path, in spite of all the mounting obstacles that rise on the way. *Dhriti* plants the idea, maintains it constantly in our vision, makes us steadily strive towards it, and when obstacles come, *Dhriti* mobilises secret powers within ourselves to face them all steadily, courageously and heroically.

* **The unwavering "fortitude" by which, through *Yoga*, the functions of the mind, the *Prana* find the senses are restrained, that "fortitude" O Partha, is *Sattwic* (Pure).**

This secret fire in man that makes him glow in life and rockets him to spectacular achievement is not generally found in those who have no control over themselves and are voluptuously indulging in the sensuous fields. A dissipated individual, who *has drained of his energy through wrong-thinking and false living,* shall discover no *Dhriti* in himself. This subtle faculty of "fortitude" has been analysed and classified under the three main heads: the good (*Sattwic*), the passionate (*Rajasic*) and the dull (*Tamasic*). But in all of them it is interesting to note, *Dhriti* stands for "the consistency of purpose" with which every individual pursues his field of endeavour, chosen for him by his "understanding" (*Buddhi*).

To dissuade the organs of action and perception from their false pursuits of ephemeral joys and the consequent dissipations, the mind must have some fixed source to draw its energies and satisfactions from. Without fixing the mind upon something *nobler and higher, we cannot detach it from the present pursuits.* Therefore Krishna insists that *Yoga* is unavoidable.

Mind alone can control the organs-of-action (*Karmendriyas*) and the organs-of-perception (*Jnanendriyas*) With faithful contemplation upon the Self, the mind gains in steadiness and equipoise, peace and satisfaction, and therefore, it develops its ability to rule over the sense-organs. But all these achievements are possible only when the inner personality can constantly supply a steady stream of *Dhriti*. Constancy in endeavour in any field of activity, becomes *Sattwic Dhriti* when constituted as described above.

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* धृत्या यया धारयते मनःप्राणेन्द्रियक्रियाः ।
योगेनाव्यभिचारिण्या धृतिः सा पार्थ सात्त्विकी ॥

(Ge Ch. XVIII–33)

THE RAJASIC

> * **Passionate, desiring to gain the fruits of actions, greedy, harmful, immoral, associated with excitement and grief, such an " agent " is said to be passionate (*Rajasic*).**

A " doer " belonging to the passionate type is being exhaustively painted here. He is full of desires, passions and attachments and deligently clings on to some wished-for-gain or goal. He is swayed by passion (*raaga*) and is one who eagerly seeks the fruit of his work. He is ever greedy (*Lubddah*), in the sense that a *Rajasic* " doer " is never satisfied at whatever gains he comes to enjoy, but greedily thirsts for more and more. He is insatiable because his desires multiply from moment to moment.

When a man full of desires and passions works with mounting greed, he naturally becomes very malignant (*Himsatmaka*) in his programmes of pursuit. He would never hesitate to injure another, if such injury were to win his end. He is blind to the amount of sorrow he might bring to others; he is concerned only with the realization of his ulterior motives. When a man of this type, with the above qualities becomes maliciously resolved to gain his own ends, it is but natural that be becomes impure (*Ashuchi*) meaning " immoral ".

Even unrighteous methods and vulgar immoralities are no bar to such a " doer "; he will puruse them if thereby his particular desire can be fulfilled. He may ordinarily be quite a moral and righteous man, but the grandeur of his composure and the steadiness of his morality, expressed during his quieter moments all fly away as useless splinters when the sledge hammer of his greed and passion, vengeful and malignant schemes thud upon his heart.

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* रागी कर्मफलप्रेप्सुर्लुब्धो हिंसात्मकोऽशुचिः ।
हर्षशोकान्वितः कर्ता राजसः परिकीर्तितः ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVIII)-72

It is but natural that such a passionate "doer", when he acts in his blinding desires, comes to live, all through his embodied existence, a sad life of agitations, "moved by joys and sorrows" and "full of exitement and grief" (*Harsha-Shoka-Anvita*).

The "action" of the passionate (*Rajasic*) is that which is undertaken to win his desires with an exetrmely insistent "I am acting" mentality. Generally such undertakings are works of heavy toil bringing in great strain and its consequent physical fatigue and mental exhaustion. The individual is impelled to act and struggle by a well defined and extremely arrogant ego-sense. He generally works, under tension and strain, since he comes to believe that he alone can perform it and nobody else can ever help him. All the time he is exhausted with his own anxieties and fears at the thought whether his goal will ever be achieved or not. When an individual works thus with an arrogant ego and with all its self-centredness, he becomes so restless as to make himself totally exhausted and completely shattered. Such "actions" belong to the category of the passionate (*Rajasic*).

> * **But that "action" which is done by one, longing for desires or gain with egoism, or with much effort, is declared to be *Rajasic* (passionate).**

All activities of political leaders, social workers, great industrialists, over-anxious parents, fanatic preachers, proselytizing missionaries and blind money makers, are examples of this type when they are at their zenith.

It is the concept of plurality that gives rise to all passions and desires. Where plurality is recognized, there the ego has crystallized in the perceiver. When the individual stands apart from the world as a separate, distinct entity, he will be able to recognize only a multiple world of separate things and beings. This "knowledge" that recognizes plurality by reason of separateness, is *Rajasic* in its texture.

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* यत्तु कामेप्सुना कर्म साहंकारेण वा पुनः।
क्रियते बहुलायासं तद्राजसमुदाहृतम्॥

(Ge. Ch. XVIII-24

> * **But that " knowledge " which sees in all beings various entities of distinct kinds, (and) as different from one another, know that knowledge to be *Rajasic* (Passionate).**

The " knowledge " of the passionate, ever restless in its energy, considers various entities as different from one another. According to the *Rajasic* " knowledge " the world is an assortment of innumerable types of different varieties. The intellect of such a man perceives distinctions among the living creatures and divides them into different classes as the animal, the vegetable and the human kingdoms.

Because of the *Rajasic* knowledge or outlook, the " understanding " (*Buddhi*) of the passionate comes to judge the righteous (*Dharma*) and the unrighteous (*Adharma*), what is to be done and what is not to be done, in a slightly perverted manner. *Rajasic* " understanding " cannot come to right judgements, because it is invariably coloured with its own preconceived notions of powerful likes and dislikes.

> ** **That by which one wrongly understands *Dharma* and *Adharma* and also what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, that intellect O Partha, is *Rajasic* (Passionate).**

Because of the *Rajasic* " understading " (*Buddhi*) the constancy of pursuit of such an individual will be in the three fields of duty, wealth and pleasure, and he will be pursuing one or the other of them with an extreme desire to enjoy the resultant satisfactions.

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* पृथक्त्वेन तु यज्ज्ञानं नानाभावान्पृथग्विधान् ।
वेत्ति सर्वेषु भूतेषु तज्ज्ञानं विद्धि राजसम् ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVIII–21)

** यया धर्ममधर्मं च कार्यं चाकार्यमेव च ।
अयथावत्प्रजानाति बुद्धिः सा पार्थ राजसी ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVIII–31)

> * *But the "fortitude", O Arjuna, by which one holds* **fast to duty, pleasure and wealth from attachment and craving for the fruits of action, that "fortitude" O Partha, is** ***Rajasic*** **(passionate).**

The consistency with which one holds fast to duty (*Dharma*) wealth (*Artha*) and pleasure (*Kama*), encouraged by his growing desire to enjoy the fruit of each of them, is the steadiness or "fortitude" *of the Rajasic type. It is interesting to note that in the* enumeration Krishna has avoided *Moksha* (Liberation) and has only taken the first three of the "four aims of man" (*Purusharthas*). for. a *Rajasic* man is satisfied with the first three fields of self-effort and has no desire for spiritual liberation.

He follows *Dharma* only to gain Heaven; he pursues *Artha* so that he may have power in this life; and he pursues *Kama* with the firm belief and faith that sensuous objects can give him all satisfaction in his life The steadiness with which such an "understanding" would strive and work in these fields is *classified as Rajasic Dhriti.*

THE TAMASIC

> ** **An "agent" who is unsteady, vulgar, unbending, cheating, malicious, lazy, desponding and procrastinating, is said to be** ***Tamasic*** **(dull).**

A "doer" who has no control over himself, and therefore is ever unsteady in his application, is *of the Tamasic* type. He becomes unbalanced in his activities, because his mind is not obedient to the warnings of his intellect A "*Yuktha*-mind" is one which is obedient to and perfectly under the control of the intellect. A *Tamasic* man is uncultured in as much as he acts in the world, spurred by the impulses and instincts of his own

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* यया तु धर्मकामार्थान्धृत्या धारयतेऽर्जुन ।
प्रसङ्गेन फलाकाङ्क्षी धृतिः सा पार्थ राजसी ॥

(Ge. Ch XVIII-34)

** अयुक्तः प्राकृतः स्तब्धः शठो नैष्कृतिकोऽलसः ।
विषादी दीर्घसूत्री च कर्ता तामस उच्यते ॥

(Ge Ch. XVIII-28)

mind. The glory of the cultured man comes out only when he brings the impulsive storms of his mind under the chastening control and intelligent guidance of his intellect. "*Ayuktha*" is one who behaves as though he has no control over his own animal impulses and low instincts. When such an individual acts in the world, he cannot but behave as a vulgar man (*Praakrita*).

When an individual thus acts, if anyone around him were to show up an intellectual mirror for him to recognize his own vulgarities, he would not readily accept the picture and realize that his methods of living are vulgar. He is obstinate (*Sthabdha*) and in his stubborn nature he will not lend himself to be persuaded to act more honourably.

He becomes dishonest in the sense that he becomes extremely stubborn (*Shatah*). Herein the dishonesty or deceitfulness arises out of his incapacity to see any point of view other than the false conclusions into which he has fallen. Such an individual is not a dependable character, in as much as he conceals his real motives and purposes from others around him and secretly works out his programmes which generally bring about a lot of sorrow to him and to all around him.

He is malicious (*Naishkritikah*). This term describes, according to Shankara, one who is bent upon creating quarrels and disputes among people, and one who with vengefulness pursues his adversary and destroys him.

The dull "doer" is a very indolent man spending his time in over-indulgence. He is an idler in the sense that he would love to avoid all creative endeavours and productive efforts, if by deceit or cunning he can procure, easily and readily, chances for enjoyment and objects of plesaure. He would pursue such a path however immoral it may be. He is a social pestilence; he enjoys and consumes without striving and producing. He will put forth no effort; drowsiness of intellect that renders him incapable of correct thinking, is a typical feature in him. The three brothers of Lanka mentioned in *Ramayana*, in fact represent three types of "doers". Of them Kumbhakarna who sleeps six months and wakes up only to spend the rest of the six months in eating, is

symbolic of a *Tamasic* " doer ".

He is also one who will not meet the challenges of life squarely —a despondent (*Vishadi*). He has not the vitality or stamina to stand up against the challenges he meets with. This is because his over-indulgent nature has sapped out all his vitality and courage to meet life. Invariably he spends his time complaining against men and things around him and wishes for a secure spot in the world where he will be away from all obstacles, so that he may peacefully continue satisfying his endless thirst for sensuous enjoyments.

An individual so benumbed in his inner nature, slowly gathers within himself an incapacity to arrive at any firm judgement—Procrastination (*Dirgha-Sutri*). Even if he comes to any vague decision, he has not the sufficient will to continue the consistent pursuit of his judgement. Indolent as he is by nature, more often than not, he postpones the right action until it is too late. This procrastinating tendency is natural to a *Tamasic* " actor ".

Thus one who is unsteady, vulgar, arrogant, deceitful, malicious, indolent, despondent, and procrastinating, belongs to the dullest type of " agents " available in the fields of human endeavour.

Such people have no regard for the consequences of their actions. Ere long they lose their vitality and injure all those who are depending upon them. They surrender their dignity and status, their capabilities and subtle faculties—all for the sake of their pursuit of certain delusory goal of life. All they demand is a temporary joy of some sense gratification and a tickling satisfaction of some fancy of the hour. Therefore *Tamasic* actions have the following characteristics as mentioned in the following stanza.

> * That " action " which is undertaken from delusion, without a regard for the consequence, loss, injury and ability, is declared to be *Tamasic* (dull).

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* अनुबन्धं क्षयं हिंसामनवेक्ष्य च पौरुषम् ।
मोहादारभ्यते कर्म यत्तत्तामसमुच्यते ॥ (Ge. Ch. XVIII-25)

The " actions " (*Karma*) of a the dull type (*Tamasic*) are performed without any consideration for the consequences thereof and without any regard for the loss of power or vitality. Such persons never care for the loss or injury caused to others by their actions, nor do they pay any attention to their own status and ability, when they act. All such careless and irresponsible " actions " (*Karmas*) undertaken merely because of some delusory misconception of the goal, fall under the *Tamasic* type. Habits of drinking, gambling, corruption, etc., are example of the dull (*Tamasic*) " action ".

Looking through such a confused intellect of compelling ideas, the dull not only fail to see things as they are, but invariably project their own ideas upon the world and judge it wrongly. In fact a man of *Tamasic* intellect views the world as if it is meant for him and for his pleasure alone.

> *** But that " knowledge " which clings to one single effect, as if it were the whole, without reason, without foundation in truth, and which is narrow, is declared to to be *Tamasic* (dull).**

An intellect that is fumed under the dulling effects of extreme *Tamas* clings to one single effect as though it were the whole, never enquiring into its cause. The " knowledge " of the dull is painted here as that belonging to the lowest type of spiritual seekers. They are generally fanatic in their faith and in their views and values of life. They never enquire into and try to discover the cause of things and happenings; they are unreasonable (*ahaitukam*).

With a clinging attachment to everything, without any firm foundation upon the Truth, with extreme self-arrogance a *Tamasic* man lives on for the satisfaction of his matter envelopments. He totally ignores the Divine Presence, the Infinite Consciousness. The " knowledge " of the dull is circumscribed by its own concept

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* यत्तु कृत्स्नवदेकस्मिन्कार्ये सक्तमहैतुकम् ।
अतत्त्वार्थवदल्पं च तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVIII–22)

of self importance and thus its vision becomes narrow (*alpam*) and limited.

Such a *Tamasic* "knowledge" generates only a *Tamasic* "understanding" or *Buddhi*, which is characterised as below:

> * That which, enveloped in darkness, sees *Adharma* as *Dharma* and all things perverted, that intellect, O Partha, is *Tamasic* (dull).

The type of "understanding" which brings sorrows to everyone including the individual himself, is the "understanding" of the dull (*Tamasic*). Actually it is no "understanding" at all; it can at best be called only a bundle of chronic misunderstanding. Such an intellect runs into its own conclusions but unfortunately, it always ends in wrong conclusions only. It has such a totally perverted "understanding" that it recognizes "*Adharma*" as "*Dharama*", the "wrong" as the "right". This faculty of coming to wrong judgements is amply seen in the dull, because their entire reasoning capacity is enveloped by complete darkness and egoistic drunkenness.

The steadiness with which such a *Tamasic* "understanding" (*Buddhi*) would strive and work is calssified as *Tamasic Dhriti*, which has characteristics as mentiond below.

> ** The "constancy" because of which a stupid man does not abandon dream, fear, grief, depression and also arrogance (conceit), that "fortitude", O Partha, is *Tamasic* (dull)

In this stanza we have the description of the dull type of "fortitude"; it is not very difficult to understand it, because

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* अधर्मं धर्ममिति या मन्यते तमसावृता।
सर्वार्थान्विपरीतांश्च बुद्धिः सा पार्थ तामसी॥

(Ge. Ch. XVIII-32)

** यया स्वप्नं भयं शोकं विषादं मदमेव च।
विमुञ्चति दुर्मेधा धृतिः सा पार्थ तामसी॥

(Ge. Ch. XVI[illegible]

a substantial majority of us belong to this type ! The steadiness of purpose with which one does not give up one's dreams and imaginations, fears and agitations, griefs and sorrows, depressions and arrogance, is of the *Tamasic* type.

The term dream (*Swapna*) is used here to indicate falsely fancied imaginations thrown up by a mind that is almost drowned in sleep. To see things which are not there but are delusively projected by one's own fancy, is called a dream. The dull personalities project upon the world of objects a dreamy value of reality and false joy, and then laboriously strive to gain them.

Such men of delusion will have many a fancied fear (*Bhaya*) for the future, which of course may never come to pass; but it can efficiently destroy the equilibrium and balance, poise and peace in the individual's life. There are many among us who have experienced such fears by hundreds in the past. Some fear that they are going to die, but each following day they wake up healthy to face the world. Psychologically they are victims of a fear-complex and it is interesting to note that these men hug on to such complexes with consistency.

Grief, depression and arrogance (*Shokam, Vishadam, Madam*)—these again are great channels through which human vitality gets dissipated. A man of extreme dullness will constantly keep on these three in his bosom and thereby suffer a sense of self-depletion and inner exhaustion. "Grief" (*Shokam*) is, in general the painful feeling of disappointment at something that has already happened in the *past* ; while "depression" (*Vishadam*) generally reaches our bosom as a result of our despair regarding the *future*, and "arrogance" (*Madam*) is the sense of lusty conceit with which a foolish man lives his immoral low life in the *present*.

One who follows these five values of life is termed here by Lord Krishna as a fool (*Durmedha*) ; and the "fortitude" with which such a fool follows his dreams and fears, grief and despondencies, arrogance and passion. is indicated as the *Dhriti* of the *Tamasic* type.

In the logical thought development of this chapter so far, we found not only the three factors that constitute the "impulse of all actions" but also the two "forces behind all activity", which not only propel activity, but also control and direct it—the *Buddhi* and the *Dhriti*. The dissection and observation of "work" is now complete since we have understood the "anatomy and physiology" of work. Now the "psychology" of work is to be discussed.

With the three constituents of "work" namely "knowledge", "agency" and "action", helped by the right type of "understanding" (*Buddhi*) and "fortitude" (*Dhriti*), every living creature, from the womb to the tomb, continues acting in the world. To what purpose? Everyone acts for the same goal of gaining happiness, meaning a more complete sense of fulfilment. Though the goal be thus one and the same, viz. "happiness", since different types of constituents go into the make-up of our actions, and since we are so different in the texture of our "understanding" and "fortitude", the path adopted by each one of us is distinctly different from those adopted by all others. Of the five component parts that make up an "action" since each is of three different types, it follows that "happiness" that is gained also must be of three different types.

That "happiness" which, in the beginning is like poison and very painful, but which when it works itself out, fulfils itself in a nectarine success, is the enduring "happiness" of the *Sattwic* type. "Happiness" that arises from constant effort is the happiness that can yield us a greater joy and a larger sense of fulfilment. Flimsy happiness that is gained through sense indulgence and sense gratification is a joy that is fleeting, and after its onslaught there is a terrific undercurrent of back-lash that comes to upset our equilibrium and drag us into depths of despondency.

> * That which is like poison at first, but in the end like nectar, that "happiness" is declared to be *Sattwic* (pure), born of the purity of one's own mind.

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* यत्तदग्रे विषमिव परिणामेऽमृतोपमम् ।
तत्सुखं सात्त्विकं प्रोक्तमात्मबुद्धिप्रसादजम् ॥ (Ge. Ch. XV

The joy arising out of inner self-control and the consequent self-perfection is not cheap gratification. In the begining its practice is certainly very painful and extremely arduous. But one who has discovered in oneself the necessary courage and heroism to walk the precipitous "path" of self purification and inward balance, comes to enjoy the subtlest of happiness and the all-fulfilling sense of inward peace. This "happiness" (*Sukha*), arising out of self-control and self discipline, is classified here by Lord Krishma as *Sattwic* "happiness".

By carefully living a life of the "good" (*Sattwic*) and acting in disciplined self-control maintaining the *Sattwic* qualities in all their "component parts", one can develop the "*Prasada*" of one's inner nature. The term "*Prasada*" means that which is returned or given with joy and with good intentions. The peace and the tranquillity, the joy and the expansion, that the mind and the intellect come to experience as a result of their discipline, are the true "*Prasada*". The joy arising out of spiritual practices, provided by the integration of the inner nature, is called "*Prasada*", which is the *Sattwic* "happiness". In short, it is a sense of fulfilment and a gladness of heart that well up in the bosom of a cultured man, as a result of his balanced and self-disciplined life of high ideals and divine values of life, and that is the enduring "happiness" of all men-of-perfection.

On the contrary, that "happiness" which arises in the bosom when the appropriate world-of-objects comes in contact with the sense-organs, is indeed a thrill that appears to be nectārine in the begining, but unfortunately, it vanishes as quickly as it comes, dumping the enjoyer into a pit of exhaustion and indeed into a sense of ill-reputed dissipation. This sort of "happiness" is classified as the *Rajasic* type which is generally pursued by men of passion.

*** That pleasure which arises from the contact of the sense-organs with the objects, (which is) at first like nectar, (but is) in the end like poison, is declared to be** ***Rajasic.***

Rajasic "happiness" arises only when the sense-organs are actually in contact with the sense-objects. Unfortunately, this contact cannot be permanently established, for the objects and situations always change. The subjective mind and intellect, the instruments that come in contact with the objects are also variable and changing. The sense-organs cannot afford to embrace the sense-objects at all times with the same appetite, and even if they do so, the very object in the embrace of the sense-organs withers and putrefies, raising the stink of death. Nor can any one fully enjoy even the passing glitter of joy that the sense-organs give him, for even at the moment of enjoyment the joy-possibility in it gets unfortunately tainted by an anxiety that it may leave him. Thus, the temporary-joys of the sense-objects do not at all give satisfaction, since they bury the enjoyer, ere long, in a tomb of sorrow.

Still more soul-killing is the "happiness" of the dull, *Tamasic*, which deludes the higher possiblities in us and vitiates the culture in us. When the pursuit of such "happiness" is continued for a length of time, it creates on the intellect a thick crust of wrong values and false ideals, and drains the spiritual sensitivity of the personality.

> ** The pleasure, which at first and in the sequel deludes the Self, arising from sleep, indolence and heedlessness, is declared to be *Tamasic*.

This type of *Tamasic* "happiness" satisfies mere sense-cravings; for, such *Tamasic* "happiness" arises, according to Lord Krishna from sleep (*Nidra*), idolence (*Alasya*) and heedlessness (*Pramaada*).

What is meant here by *Nidra* (sleep) is not the psychophysical

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* विषयेन्द्रियसंयोगाद्यत्तदग्रेऽमृतोपमम् ।
परिणामे विषमिव तत्सुखं राजसं स्मृतम् ॥
(Ge. Ch. XVIII-38)

** यदग्रे चानुबन्धे च सुखं मोहनमात्मनः ।
निद्रालस्यप्रमादोत्थं तत्तामसमुदाहृतम् ॥
(Ge. Ch. XVIII-39)

condition of the personality ; philosophically the term " sleep " stands for " the non-apprehension of Reality " and the incapacity of the dull-witted to perceive any permanent, ever existing goal of life. This encourages one to seek simple sense-gratifications at the flesh level.

Gradually such an individual's intellect loses the ability to think out correctly the problems that face it and come to correct judgements. This inertia of the intellect, *Alasya*, makes it insensitive to the inspiring song of life, and a person having such an intellect is generally tossed here and there by the passing tides of his own instincts and impusles.

As every challenge in life reaches and demands a response, the indolent mind seeks out a compromise and tries to act, heedless of the voice of the Higher in the individual. When an individual has thus lived for some time carelessly ignoring the Voice of the Higher, he becomes more and more removed from his divine perfection. He sinks lower and lower into his animal nature.

When such an individual, who is heedless of the higher calls, indolent in his intellectual level and completely asleep to the existence and the play of Reality, seeks " happiness ", he seeks only a " happiness " that deludes the soul, both at the beginning and at the end. Such " happiness " is here classified by Lord Krishna as *Tamasic*.

15

Human Nature and Self-development

That the nature of man is determined by the preponderance of any one of the *Gunas* over the others, has been already discussed. As a result of the previous conservation of a particular tendency, one of the "qualities" (*Gunas*) gains a preponderance over the other two even from one's childhood, according to which is the "Faith" (*Sraddha*) entertained by the individual. *Sraddha* determines the texture of our impressions in us, which in its turn commands our view-of-life. Naturally an individual's physical activities, psychological behaviour and intellectual make-up are all ordered by the type of *Sraddha* he has to come to maintain in himself.

The types of "Faith" that feed and nourish each bosom, are, we notice, vastly different from one another. The more we observe the differences, the more we are led to inquire why it should be so. According to the *Geeta*·

*** The faith of each one is in accordance with his nature, O Bharatha. The Man consists of his faith ; as a man's faith is, so is he.**

The Lord explains in the *Geeta* that the "faith" in each heart is ordered by its own nature. It is very difficult to say whether "faith" orders the nature or the nature prescribes the "faith"; each is intimately wedded to the other; each obeys the other most faithfully indeed.

However, the *Geeta* declares that it is the nature in an individual (*Vasanas*) that rules his "faith" although, if "faith" can be broken and remoulded, as it can be sometimes, at the irresistible compulsion of painful experiences, the nature of that one does faithfully obey only the new *Sraddha*. But generally speaking the "faith" in each man takes its hue and quality from the stuff of his being—the predominating temperment in him. The essence of "faith" lies in the secret energy of the ego with which it holds fast its convictions and will, to reach a definite chosen end by some well thought-out and entirely self-planned means.

Man's potentiality determines his "faith" in a given end and this "faith" then reacts upon this potentiality determining its future course and moulds the being of man in its turn. Both react upon each other. Man is verily what his "faith" is; the type of personality and its effectiveness or otherwise are all determined by the "faith" under which it functions. The achievement of life is ever coloured by the type of "faith" with which the individual pursues his activities; according to the *Geeta*, "faith" itself is of three kinds: the divine the undivine and the diabolic.

> ** **Three fold is the faith of the embodied, which is inherent in their nature—the *Sattwic* (pure), the *Rajasic* (passionate) and the *Tamasic* (dark). Thus you hear of it.**

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* सत्त्वानुरूपा सर्वस्य श्रद्धा भवति भारत।
श्रद्धामयोऽयं पुरुषो यो यच्छ्रद्धः स एव सः॥

(Ge. Ch. XVII–3)

** त्रिविधा भवति श्रद्धा देहिनां सा स्वभावजा।
सात्त्विकी राजसी चैव तामसी चेति तां शृणु॥

(Ge. Ch. XVII–2)

As the inner disposition, so the man. The more an individual identifies with his physical sheath, the more crystallized becomes his ego, under the influence of his inner disposition. The temperaments that rule the behaviours of the human beings are three in number ; the Good (*Sattwic*), the Passionate (*Rajasic*) and the Dull (*Tamasic*). Therefore, the " faith " that is entertained by human beings must necessarily belong to any one of the above categories.

Why should we take into consideration these temperaments at all and try to understand the type of " faith " and their play in life? These are explained in the following stanza from the *Geeta:*

> * The *Sattwic* or " pure " men worship the gods ; the *Rajasic* or the " passionate " worship the *Yakshas* and the *Rakshasas*, the *Tamasic* people or the " dark " folk, worship the ghosts and a host of *Bhuthas* or the Nature-spirits.

Every man in his life brings his entire devotion to offer at one altar or the other, and seeks a fulfilment from the benefits that accrue from his invocations. In the scriptural language this is called " worship ". This need not indicate only the ritualisitc worship of some god or deity. The term " worship " here can also embrace a wider implication Everyone of us is a worshipper at an altar chosen by him, even athiests are worshippers ; perhaps they devote themselves at the altar of sense-objects or of wealth or of power. In this ampler meaning, if we were to read the stanza, the meaning becomes very clear indeed Men of *Sattwic* temperament, because of their serene composure and tranquil disposition, seek their fulfilment at an altar of divinity indicating the higher impulses and the nobler qualities of their being. Naturally they come to seek and adore it

Men of passionate nature (*Rajas*) are those who have extreme ambition and are constantly restless in their self-chosen fields

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* यजन्ते सात्त्विका देवान्यक्षरक्षांसि राजसाः ।
प्रेतान्भूतगणांश्चान्ये यजन्ते तामसा जनाः ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVII–4)

of activity. They are said to be worshipping and propitiating demi-gods (*Yakshas*) and (*Rakshasas*). The idea here is that the choice of the altar will depend upon the silent demand of the heart of the devotee. One will never go to a bookstall to purchase some dress. So too, the active and passionate type of men can feel an admiration for and can appreciate only an equally active and passionate (*Rajasic*) demi-god or deity.

It is interesting to note here that the *Yakshas* are described as the brothers of *Kubera*, the minister in charge of Finance in Heaven, and the *Rakshasas* are "beings of enormous strength and power". All men of action ambitious of success and achievement, would necessarily seek the friendship of only rich men and men of power and strength. Now turn wherever you will, you can find the truth of this principle amply illustrated.

Rajasic men seek wealth and power to gain success and achievement whereas the deadly spirits and such other low and vicious powers are invoked by men of inactivity (*Tamas*) for the satisfaction of some of their low urges for vicious sense gratifications. Men of low moral calibre and false ambitions generally would try to fulfil their pernicious ambitions with the help of the wretched vengeful scum of the society (*Pretas*, *Bhutas*), who though physically alive, are dead to all the sweetness and goodness of life. These hired *goondas*, generally chosen from the professional jail-birds, are the fit powers to be invoked in order that low and criminal ambitions of the *Tamasic* may be fulfilled.

The serenity gained from spritual pursuits, the power and prestige invoked from the wealth and the people, the sensuous pleasures gathered from the low thoughtless acts of criminal intentions, are the different types of "altars" at which men of serenity (*Sattwic*), of ambition (*Rajasic*) and of heedlessness (*Tamasic*)' generally seek their individual satisfaction.

With these three natural appetites as the measuring rods, Krishna classifies the entire community of men under four distinct types. The criterion for this classification is the texture of man's inner equipment which determine the aptitude and ability that one brings into play for his achievements in his fields of activity.

ccordingly, the Hindu scriptures have brought the entire humanity ıder a four-fold classification. Therefore Lord Krishna says the Bh. *Geeta*,

> * The four-fold caste has been created by me according to the differences in *Guna* and *Karma* ; though I am the author thereof know Me as non-doer and immutable.

This is a stanza that has been much misused by the upholders the social crime styled as the caste system in India. *Varna* eaning different shades of texture or colour, is employed here the *Yogic* sense. In the *Yoga Shastra*, they attribute some efinite clours to the triple *Gunas*, which mean as we have said rlier, "the mental temperaments". Thus, *Sattva* is considered white *Rajas* as red and *Tamas*, as black. Man is essentially e thoughts that he entertains From individual to individual, en when the thoughts are superficially the same, there are clear stinctions recognizable from their temperaments.

On the basis of these temperamental distinctions, the entire ankind has been, for the purpose of spiritual study, classified to four "castes" or *Varnas*. Just as, in a metropolis, on the ısis of trade or professions, we divide people as doctors, advocates, ofessors, traders, politicians, tongawalas, etc., so too on the basis the different textures of thoughts entertained by the intelligent eatures, the four "castes" had been labelled in the past.

However, the decadent Hindu-*Brahmin* found it very convenient quote the first quarter of the stanza, and repeat "I created e four *Varnas*", and give this tragic social vivisection a divine ok having a godly sanction. They, who did this, were in fact, e greatest blasphemers that Hinduism ever had to recon with. or *Vyasa*, in the very same line of the couplet, and in the very ıme breath, describes the basis on which this classification was ade, when he says, "*By the differences in the mental qualities nd the physical action* (*of the people*)".

चातुर्वर्ण्यं मया सृष्टं गुणकर्मविभागशः।
तस्य कर्तारमपि मां विद्ध्यकर्तारमव्ययम्॥

(Ge C. IV-13)

Certain well-defined characteristics determine the types of these four classes of human beings; they are not always determined by heredity or accident of birth. They are termed in our society as: the *Brahmanas*—with a major portion of *Sattwa*, a little *Rajas* and the minimum *Tamas;* the *Kshatriyas*—mostly *Rajas* with some *Sattwa,* and a dash of *Tamas;* the *Vysyas*—with more *Rajas,* less *Sattwa* and some *Tamas;* and the *Shudras*—mostly *Tamas,* a little of *Rajas* with only a trace of *Sattwa.*

Not by birth alone is man a *Brahmin;* by cultivating good intentions and noble thoughts alone can one aspire to *Brahmin*-hood; nor can one pose as a *Brahmin* merely because of some external physical marks or bodily actions in the outer world. The definition insists that he alone is a *Brahmin* whose thoughts are as much *Sattwic* as his actions. A *Kshatriya* is one who is *Rajasic* in his thoughts and actions. A *Shudra* is not only one whose thoughts are *Tamasic* but also one who lives the life of low endeavours for satisfying his base animal passions and fleshy appetites. The scientific attitude in which this definition has been declared, is clear from the exhaustive implications of the statement; "ACCORDING TO THE DIFFERENCE IN " "*Guna*" AND "*Karma*".

Therefore, this four-fold classification is universal and for all times. Even today it holds good. In modern language the four types of people may be called, (1) the creative thinkers (2) the politicians, (3) the commercial employers and (4) the labourers (the proletarians). The *Sattwic*-minded thinkers are the front-line leaders of any nation; the alert and vigilent *Kshatriyas* should administer law impartially and most ruthlessly defend the frontiers of their nation. For a fair profit the traders and agriculturists—the *Vysyas* must distribute the produce of the land and the factory. The *Shudras* must serve all in an attitude of faith in mankind, loyalty to the cause and love to all. Without these four main functions, carried out in joy and with rhythm, there can be no valid peace or progress in the communal life of any nation.

In any nation, which is existing and functioning as an integral whole every part is as essential and as important as any other part. This division is not meant for the stratification of the society into

caste-distinctions and mutual exclusion of each other in suffocating and self-dividing compartmentation. But this is what resulted in our unintelligent handling of this functional division of the members of the society, primarily and solely meant for efficiently running the worldy affairs by the community.

Therefore, to consider one "caste" as inferior to another is illogical, absurd and unscientific. All are important, and each must have due respect, regard and love for the other. The entire body of humanity is really one complete entity. Just as the head, or the hands, or the thighs, or the feet alone can never be the whole man, and every part of him is as essential as the other, so are the four tiers of social functionaries, indeed, of equal importance. None of them can independently live without the co-operation and active support of the other. *Life is whole; functions are many.* Each is fulfilled by a certain type of ability. According to these aptitudes manifest in man, the "castes" are formed.

Different types of duties are assigned to each of these classes of individuals depending upon their nature (*Swabbaava*) which is ordered by the proportion of the *Gunas* in the make up of each type of inner equipment. The duties prescribed for a particular type depend upon the manifestation of the inner ruling *Gunas*, as expressed in the individual's contact with the world and his activities in society. The tendencies and aptitudes are not diagnosed by examining merely the texture of the person's skin or the colour of his hair; an individual is judged better by his expressions in life and by the quality of his contacts with the world outside. These alone can reflect one's inner personality—the quality and texture of the contents of one's mind-intellect. Therefore Krishna says:

> * Of scholars (*Brahmins*), of leaders (*Kshatriyas*) and of traders (*Vysyas*), as also of workers (*Shudras*), O Paranthapa, the duties are distributed according to the qualities born of their own nature.

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* ब्राह्मणक्षत्रियविशां शूद्राणां च परंतप ।
कर्माणि प्रविभक्तानि स्वभावप्रभवैर्गुणैः ॥

After testing and determining the quality of the inner personality, the individuals in the community are classified, and different types of duties are prescribed for each. Naturally the duties prescribed for a *Brahmin* are different from those expected of a *Kshatriya*, and the work of the *Vysya* and *Shudra* should necessarily be different from that of the *Brahmin* and the *Kshatriya*. The *Shastra* enjoins duties, by pursuing which the preponderant *Tamas* can be evolved into *Rajas*, which in its turn can grow to become *Sattwa*.

By observing a person one can conclude as to which class he belongs, whether to the *Brahmin*, the *Kshatriya*, the *Vysya*, or the *Shudra*. In this context when we say a man is *Sattwic* it only means that the *Sattwic* qualities are predominant in him; even in the most *Sattwic* of persons, the *Rajasic* and the *Tamasic* qualities can and will show up; so too, even in the most *Tamasic* man, *Sattwa* and *Rajas* will necessarily show up sometimes. No one is exclusively of one *Guna* alone.

The mental temperament of a man determines what class he belongs to, and each class has been given particular duties to be performed, in the world. If a man who is fit temperamentally for one type of work, is entrusted with a different type of activity, he will bring chaos not only into the field of activity but also to himself. For example, if a *Kshatriya* were asked to fan someone in a spirit of service, he might condescend to do so, but you will find him ordering someone else, almost instinctively, to fetch a fan for him ! So too, if a man of commercial temperament (a *Vysya*) comes to serve as a temple-priest, the sacred place will become ere long worse than a trading centre; and again, let him become the head of a government, he will, out of sheer instinct, begin profitable " business " from the seat of governmental authority; people call it corruption ! !

Therefore, according to the four types of nature, as determined by their psychological characteristics, there are four kinds of social living, each having a definite function in society. They are described in the following stanzas from the *Geeta:*

*** Serenity, self-restraint, austerity, purity, forbearance**

and also uprightness, knowledge, realization and belief in God are the duties of the *Brahmins* born of (their own) nature.

Herein we have a detailed enumeration of the duties of a *Brahmin* born out of his own predominantly *Sattwic* nature. Serenity (*Shama*) is controlling the mind from running into the world-of-objects seeking sense-enjoyments. Even if we shut off the world-of-objects by taking ourselves away from the tumult and temptations of life into a quiet lonely place, even there our minds will stride forth into the sense-fields through the memories of our past indulgences. To control consciously this instinctive flow of the mind towards the sense-objects is called *Shama* or Serenity.

SELF-CONTROL (*Dama*): Controlling the sense-organs, which are the gateways through which the external world of stimuli infiltrates into our mental domain and mars our peace, is called *Dama*. A man practising *Dama*, even if he be in the midst of sensuous objects, is not disturbed by them. A true *Brahmin* is one who practises constantly both *Shama* and *Dama*, serenity and self-control.

AUSTERITY (*Tapas*): Conscious physical self-denial in order to economise the expenditure of human energy so lavishly spent in the wrong channels of sense-indulgence, and conserving it for reaching the higher unfoldment within, is called *Tapas*. By the practice of *Shama* and *Dama*, the *Brahmin* will be steadily controlling both the mad rush of his senses and the wanderings of his mind. This helps him to conserve his inner vitality which would have been otherwise spent in hunting after sense-enjoyments. This conserved energy is utilized for higher life of Contemplation and Meditation. This subjective process of economising, conserving, and re-dedicating one's energies within is called *Tapas*. It is a *Brahmin's* nature to live in *Tapas*.

PURITY (*Shaucham*): The Sanskrit term used here includes external cleanliness and also internal purity. Habits of cleanliness

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* शमो दमस्तपः शौचं क्षान्तिरार्जवमेव च।
ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं ब्रह्मकर्म स्वभावजम्॥

(Ge Ch. XVIII–42)

in one's personal life and surroundings are the governing conditions in the life of one who is practising both *Shama* and *Dama*. The practice of *Tapas* makes him such a disciplined person that he cannot stand any disorderly confusion or state of neglect around and about him. A person living in the midst of things thrown about in a disorderly manner is certainly a man of slothful nature and of slovenly habits. It is the nature of the *Brahmin* to keep himself ever clean and pure.

FORBEARANCE (*Shanthi*): To be patient and forgiving and thus to live without struggling against wrongs done even against oneself is "forbearance"; this is the duty of a *Brahmin*. Such an individual will never harbour any hatred towards anyone; he lives with perfect equanimity amidst both the good and the bad.

UPRIGHTNESS (*Arjavam*): This is a quality which makes an individual straightforward in all his dealings, and his uprightness makes him fearless in life. He is afraid of none, and he makes no compromise of the higher calls with the lower murmurings.

Cultivating the above six-qualities—serenity (*Shama*), self-control (*Dama*), austerity (*Tapas*), purity (*Shoucham*), forbearance (*Shanthi*), and straightforwardness (*Arjavam*)—and expressing them in all his relationships with the world outside, is the lifelong duty of a typical *Brahmin*. The above mentioned. six artistic strokes paint the picture of a *Brahmin* on the stage of the world when he is dealing with things and beings that he comes across in the various situations in life. The Lord enumerates in this stanza three more duties of a *Brahmin* which are the rules of conduct controlling his spiritual life. They are *Jnanam, Vignanam* and *Astikyam.*

KNOWLEDGE (*Jnanam*): The theoretical knowledge of the world, of the structure of the equipments of experience and their behaviour while coming into contact with the outer world, of the highest goal of life, of the nature of the spirit and, in short of knowledge of all that the *Upanishads* deal with, is meant here by the term *Jnanam.*

WISDOM (*Vignanam*): If theoritical knowledge is *Jnanam,*

the personal experience is called *Vignanam*. Knowledge when digested and assimilated, brings home to man an inward experience, and thereafter, he comes to live his life, guided by this deep inner experience called " Wisdom ". Knowledge can be imparted, but " Wisdom " is to be found by the individual in himself. When a student discovers in himself the enthusiasm to live according to the knowledge gained by his studies, then from the field of his lived experience there arises " Wisdom " (*Vignanam*).

FAITH (*Astikyam*): Unless one has a deep faith in what he has studied and lived, the living itself will not be enthusiastic and full. The ardency of conviction, which is the motive-force behind one who wills to live what one has understood, is the secret sustaining power that steadily converts knowledge into " Wisdom ". The inner order, the intelligent honesty, this subtle unfatiguing enthusiasm, is called " Faith ". All the above mentioned qualities are natural to a *Brahmin* due to the predominance of *Sattwa* in him.

The *Kshatriyas* are those who have a greater dose of *Rajoguna* in the compostion of their personality. A *Kshatriya* is not defined by Lord Krishna as the Lawful son of another *Kshatriya*, but on the other hand, He enumerates here a series of qualities and behaviours noticed in a true *Kshatriya*-Personality. They are:

> *** Prowess, splendour, fortitude, promptitude, and also not fleeing from battle, generosity, lordliness—these are the duties of the *Kshatriyas*, born of (their own) nature.**

In the *Geeta*, the four castes are described in terms of their manifested individuality, when coming in contact with the world of-objects, the fields of expression. In all these descriptions we meet with details of the individual's mental and intellectual re-actions in his normal life.

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* शौर्यं तेजो धृतिर्दाक्ष्यं युद्धे चाप्यपलायनम् ।
दानमीश्वरभावश्च क्षात्रं कर्म स्वभावजम् ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVIII–43)

PROWESS AND SPLENDOUR (*Shauryam*) and (*Tejas*): This means the vigour and consistency with which one meets challenges in one's life. He who has the above two qualities, heroism and vigour of pursuit, certainly becomes a commanding personality.

FORTITUDE (*Dhriti*): This is already explained earlier. Herein, as applied to a *Kshatriya*, it is the powerful will of the person who having decided to do something, pursues the path and discovers in himself the necessary drive and consistency of purpose to meet, and if necessary, to break down all the obstacles until he reaches victory or success.

PROMPTITUDE (*Daakshyam*): The Sanskrit equivalent for the army parade-ground command " attention " is *Daakshyam*. This quality of alertness and smart vigilance is indeed *Dakshyam*. In the context here it means that the *Kshatriya* is one who is prompt in coming to decisions and in executing them completely. Such an individual is industrious and has an enviable amount of perseverance however hazardous the field of his activity might be.

NOT FLEEING FROM BATTLE: One who has all the above qualities can never readily accept defeat in any field of conflict. He will not leave any work half done and retire. Since Krishna is here generally classifying the entire human beings according to the *Gunas* predominent in them these terms should be understood in their greatest amplitude and suggestion. No doubt a true warrior will not step backward in a field of battle; but such a literal interpretation is only incomplete. The field of battle should include all fields of competition wherein things and situations arrange themselves in opposition to the planned schemes of a man of will and dash. In no such conditions will a true *Kshatriya* feel nervous. He never leaves a field which he has entered, and when he leaves it, he does so only with the crown of success !

GENEROSITY (*Daanam*): Governments and Kings cannot be popular unless they loosen their purse-strings. A man of action cannot afford to be miserly since his success would depend upon his influence on a large number of friends and supporters. The glory of a prince lies in his compassion for others who are in need

of help.

LORDLINESS (*Ishwarabhava*): As a rule, without self-confidence in one's own abilities one cannot lead others. A leader must have such a firm faith in himself that he will be able to reinforce frail hearts around him with his own self confidence. Thus lordliness is one of the necessary traits in a *Kshatriya*. He must be wafting all around a fragrance of brilliancy and dynamism, electrifying all that he comes to pervade. Lordliness is the hall mark of a *Kshatriya*.

The duties of the *Vysyas* and *Shudras* are now described in the following stanza:

> * **Agriculture, cattle-rearing and trade are the duties of the *Vysyas*, born of (their own) nature; and service is the duty of the *Shudras*, born of (their own) nature.**

Agriculture, cattle breeding and tending, trade and commerce are the three fields in which the *Vysya* can function inspiredly and exhaust his imperfections. These are duties towards which he has aptitude because of his own nature. Work in a spirit of dedication and service is the duty of a *Shudra*.

Since each mind-intellect equipment is governed and ruled over by its predominating quality (*Guna*), each equipment has its own nature to reckon with. A vehicle that can work efficiently in one medium of transport cannot work with the same efficiency in another medium; a car is efficient on a road, but not on water. The *Rajasic* mind cannot glide into meditation and maintain its poise as easily and beautifully as the *Sattwic* mind can. Similarly, in the field in which a *Kshatriya* can outshine everybody else a *Vysya* or a *Shudra* cannot. To rise to the highest position in social life all men cannot have identical opportunities. A social system can only provide "equal opportunities" for all its members to develop their gifts in and through life. In order to promote

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* कृषिगौरक्ष्यवाणिज्यं वैश्यकर्म स्वभावजम् ।
परिचर्यात्मकं कर्म शूद्रस्यापि स्वभावजम् ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVIII—44

self-development the various duties are prescribed to help moulding the personality of the different types of men.

The *Vasanas* and the temperaments (*Gunas*) that predominate in us determine what type of men we are. None belonging to the higher groups has any justification to look down with contempt upon those who are of the lower types. Each one serves the society as best as he can. Each one must work in a spirit of dedication for his own evolution and sense of fulfilment. When each one thus works according to his *Vasanas* and fully devotes his attention to his duties, it is said here that he will develop within himself and attain in stages the ultimate Perfection.

When a man works devotedly in the proper field and in the right environment which is best suited to him, he will be exhausting the existing *Vasanas* in him. And when the *Vasanas* are reduced, he will experience tranquillity and peace within, and it will become possible for him to discover more and more concentration and single pointed contemplation. With these faculties in him he can ultimately reach the State of Perfection, the Life in the Self. Therefore Krishna says:

> * **Each devoted to his own duty, man attains perfection. How, engaged in his own duty, he attains perfection, listen to that.**

"*Each devoted to his own duty, man attains perfection*". By being loyal to our own level of feelings and ideas and to our own development of Consciousness, we can evolve into higher states of self-unfoldment. The truth of this classification of mankind may not be very obvious, if we observe only superficially. But the biographies of all great men of action repeatedly declare the precision with which this law of life works itself out in human affairs. A tiny Corsican boy who was asked to tend his sheep refused to do so and reached Paris to become one of the greatest men the world had ever seen; and that was Napoleon. Oliver

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* स्वे स्वे कर्मण्यभिरतः संसिद्धिं लभते नरः।
स्वकर्मनिरतः सिद्धिं यथा विन्दति तच्छृणु॥

(Ge. Ch. XVIII–45)

Goldsmith would rather compose his couplets in a garret than take up a commercial job courting properity and a comfortable life. Each one is ordered by his own *Swabhava* and each can discover his fulfilment only in that self ordered field of activity.

By thus working in the field ordered by one's own *Vasanas*, if one can live, surrendering one's ego and ego-centric desires to enjoy the fruits, one can achieve a sense of fulfilment and a great peace arising out of the exhaustion of the *Vasanas*. By performing "duties ordained by one's own nature" the individual comes to know no evil; he has no chance of imprinting any new impression on his mind, impressions which in their maturity might force him to strive, to seek, to achieve and to indulge in.

To work in any field ordered by one's own *Vasanas* is better, because in that case, there is a chance for exhausting the existing *Vasanas*. When the individual strives in a field contrary to the existing *Vasanas*, he not only fails to gain exhaustion of the existing *Vasanas*, but also creates a new load of *Vasanas* in his temperament. Hence it is said here:

> * **Better to do one's own "duty", though devoid of merit, than to do the "duty" of another though well-discharged. Better is death in one's own duty; the "duty" of another is fraught with fear (is productive of positive danger).**

It is very well known, that which determines one man's personality as distinctly different from another, is the texture of the thoughts entertained by him; this texture of his thoughts is again, in its turn, determined by the pattern of thinking which his mind has gained in the past. These predetermined "channels of thinking", created by one's earlier ways of thinking, are called the *Vasanas*. Thus "duty" (*Dharma*) here should be conceived as the *Vasanas* in our mind, for no other explanation will be correct. The word "duty", used by us in our translation, is in this special

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* श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात्।
स्वधर्मे निधनं श्रेयः परधर्मो भयावहः॥

(Ge. Ch. III-35)

sense, to be understood as "*Vasanas*".

Swadharma and Paradharma: these two terms have been very badly misunderstood in recent times, in these days of the Hindu decadence. The orthodox group, wanting to perpetuate the airtight classification of the caste system, has tried to pull down these two terms into their limited applications and has written voluminous commentaries upon them which have proved dangerous to our social and individual development.

Swadharma is not the duty which accrues to an individual because of a sheer accident of birth. In its right import here, it should only mean the type of *Vasanas* that one discovers in one's own mind. To act according to one's own taste, inborn and natural, is the only known method of living in peace and joy, in success and satisfaction. To act against the grain of one's own *Vasanas* would be acting in terms of *Paradharma* and this is fraught with danger.

Hundreds of examples can be noticed in our own life and around us illustrating this scientific truth. A miserable advocate sitting in his deserted office trying to write couplets to glorify his own poverty; a thwarted doctor sitting in his empty chamber trying to catch an illusive tune, are all common sights amongst us. While circumstances had made one an advocate and the other a doctor both would have been better artists and happier men if they had gained a training in poetry and music.

In this context the message of the *Geeta* to Arjuna is a message directed to all humanity; Arjuna is born a prince, trained in the art of war, and has exhibited in his life his insatiable thirst for heroism and adventure. Naturally, his *Swadharma* is that of a prince and that can find fulfilment only in dangerous actions and endless exertions. Perhaps, as it was evident in the first chapter of the *Geeta*, Prince *Arjuna* has gathered, during his early education, that the life of renunciation and meditation (the life of a *Brahmin*) was nobler than his own life. And therefore he wanted to run away from the battle field to the silent caves of meditation. In this stanza, Lord Krishna is reminding him that to act according to his own *Vasanas*, even imperfectly, is the right path for his own

personality expression than copying the ativities of somebody else who might be living a nobler and diviner life. That this is so, is further explained in the following stanza:

> * Better is one's own duty (though) destitute of merits than the duty of another well performed. He who does the duty ordained by his own nature incurs no sin.

Very many students find it difficult to accept this idea readily. They feel that the entire society must be a ready made ideal-pattern and that the whole community must be herded into a disciplined, choiceless, rigid geometrical design. Unfortunately man is dynamically mobile and so in the surging onrush of the irresistible flood of his ideas and ideals he will shatter the pattern even if death and disaster were to befall *him*. Nature, within as well as without, is a mighty power.

And yet, the doubters would perhaps come to feel the logic of it if they consider the following: (1) the deadly posion in the fangs of a serpent never kills the serpent; (2) the living organisms crawling in fermented wine never get drunk; (3) the malarial germs in the mosquitoes do not attack them causing shivering fever. The *Swabhara* of none can destory him. If the poison is drawn from the fangs and transferred into the wine the crawling organisms die. Similarly, if the *Kshatriyas* were to perform the duties prescribed for the *Brahmin*-type of equipment, they would be committing only suicide.

In short, it is no use employing our minds in fields which are contrary to our nature. Everyone has a precise place in the scheme of created things. Each one has his own importance and none is to be despised, for each can do something which the others cannot do so well. There is no redundancy in the Lord's creation; not even a single blade of grass in unnecessarily created.

After explaining so much about the nature (*Swabhava*) and

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* श्रेयान्स्वधर्मो विगुणः परधर्मात्स्वनुष्ठितात् ।
स्वभावनियतं कर्म कुर्वन्नाप्नोति किल्बिषम् ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVIII-47)

its activities, is to stand apart from all agitations in the field of strife. Such a man is never caught on the wrong step in life. Just as a musician, constantly conscious of the background hum, sings his song easily in tune and just as a dancer dances with facility to the rhythm of the drum, a new glow of tranquil peace and dynamic harmony comes to shine through all his actions, and his achievements come to glitter conspicuously with the shadowless light of Perfection.

Work can thus be changed into worship by attuning our minds, all through activity, to the Consciousness of the Self. A Self-dedicated man so working in the consciousness of the Supreme, is the one who pays the greatest homage to his Creator.

Section - V

Range of Human Behaviour

is not taken up for study most probably because, for that type no conscious self-development is ever possible unless it be broken, recast and moulded again by the relentless hand of adversity.

The anxiety of the *Geeta* is not to classify mankind as good and bad, and to promise a paradise to the good, and *to curse the* bad to endless damnation *in hell.* The qualities enumerated here are the result of scientific observations made in the physical, mental and intellectual behaviours, when Life the "Knower", pulsates through a *disciplined* "Field" or an *undisciplined* "Field" of experience.

In almost all religious text books of the world, except the scriptures of the Hindus, the positive qualities of goodness and righteousness are glorified, but they rarely paint exhaustively the negative tendencies of a divided personality. Some critics of Hinduism are jubilant in discovering this tendency in the scriptural texts to paint the mighty characters of the wicked as a great drawback in our prophets and seers. This criticism against Hinduism was levelled mainly by the critics of the nineteenth century. Critics are very silent nowadays because of the results of the twentieth century psychological researches and the success of some of the psychiatric methods has shown that to become poignantly aware of the negative tendencies in one's own personality structure and to become consciously disgusted with those vulgur urges, are the ways of easily eradicating such wrong tendencies from one's own inner nature. "Be aware of a weakness, it readily disappears from our character" says the modern psychiatrists.

But is the bad merely a simple opposite of the good? It can never be that the good has certain urges and the bad, some other types of urges. Human urges are laways typical, and both the good and the bad are expressions of man's heart. Bad is only good misconstrued. Therefore, in the enumeration of the qualities of the bad, we do not have to meet with a sapless list of the opposites of the enumeration which painted the good. As we examine the contents of the bad mind, we shall discover that they are generally the same as those of the good, but, mis-applied under a wrong enthusiasm created as a result of some avoidable false evaluations. Virtue, poisoned with ignorance, is evil; evil

treated and cured of its poison, when it regains the health, becomes virtue.

Thus the very first stanza in the *Geeta*, which paints the *Asuric* type opens, as it were, with an apology for the "diabolically fallen" along with a powerful suggestion eliciting our most tender kindness towards them.

> * The demoniac know not what to do and what to refrain from; neither purity, nor right conduct, nor truth is found in them.

The men of *Asuric* nature know not either action or inaction. Here "action" means any intelligent piece of work undertaken and pursued with a right motive so as to gain for ourselves a better inner satisfaction.

Religious acts, selfless work and dedicated service are all examples of right actions whereby the individual gains not only an immediate profit, but also the ultimate inner hightening of culture. "Inaction" here means forbidding ourselves from striving in the right channels, and that can bring about the restlessness for ourselves and others. The list enumerating the negative tendencies of the fallen starts with the idea of ignorance; though justice may not accept it as an excuse, the heart of the society will readily find a tender forgiveness for the erring soul.

One who is incapable of deciding the actions to be pursued as well as those to be avoided by him, has no harmony within, and therefore, there is no inner purity or outer cleanliness (*Shaucha*) for such an individual. If the mind is indisciplined, since outward behaviours are nothing but expressions of the mind, there cannot be a decent and well-behaved life. Therefore, Lord Krishna indicates that in them good conduct is conspicuous by its absence.

He who is confused about "action and inaction", who has

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* प्रवृत्तिं च निवृत्तिं च जना न विदुरासुराः।
न शौचं नापि चाचारो न सत्यं तेषु विद्यते॥

(Ge. C

no purity or external cleanliness, and who fails in maintaining good conduct, cannot also maintain *truthfulness* in his words. All through, if one reads these terms very carefully in the spirit in which the Divine Charioteer had given them out, one will find in them a divine tenderness for such "diabolically fallen" folks. There is no revengefulness against the sinner anywhere to be seen in the entire length of the *Geeta.* It is a logical conclusion that such a man must necessarily be untruthful in words, not because he is deliberately pursuing dishonesty, but because, by temperament he is incapacitated to be honest.

In the description of the "diabolically fallen" we recognize the picture of an utterly sceptical materialist who looks at life from his own limited intellectual standpoint and who naturally fails to recognize any final purpose or permanent substratum for this seemingly confusing array of illogical happenings. Such materialists however have stalwart intellects and are capable of original and independent thinking; but they have to be a wee-bit trained to see something beyond what their general observation and analysis can discover for them. The materialistic view-point of life and the world are explained in this stanza as follows:

> *** They say, "The Universe is without Truth, without (moral) basis and without a God; it is not brought about by any regular causal sequence, but only with lust for its cause; what else?"**

Even when they are very scientific in their observation and analysis, the materialists fail to recognize the Truth that upholds the Universe. They recognize change, and the constant change itself is accepted by them as the world, without having for it any steady and changeless substratum. At the same time scientists admit that change is a relative phenomenon, and without a changless constant foundation, change cannot take place and cannot give us the impression of continuity. Without a screen, steady and motionless, a running film cannot be projected; without a constant

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* असत्यमप्रतिष्ठं ते जगदाहुरनीश्वरम् ।
अपरस्परसंभूतं किमन्यत्कामहैतुकम् ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVI-8)

bed the waters of the rivers cannot flow continuously. The ever changing Universe cannot give us a continuing *appearance* without its having a steady and changeless foundation! This eternal and unchanging Reality behind the ever-changing Universe is called the Truth. According to the materialists, the Universe is without Truth (*Asathyam*).

If there be no substratum, at least is there not a commanding intelligence that orders, regulates, determines and generally guides the happenings in the world? According to the materialists there is no such Director of Events and no Architect of happenings. There is no Creator and no Sustainer.

The entire Universe of beings and things is formed only as a result of mutual combinations of the great elements, and the sole ruling factor that determines creation is "chance"; and the only deciding urge propelled by which the beings are born, is nothing but "lust". Even modern psychologists insist that the sex urge alone is the mother urge because of which every thing is happening, every achievement is gained and all happiness is achieved in life. Holding this view that the world has no substratum, that there is no controlling power, and that the world continues to exist and to procreate by itself, if a society were to live, giving full vent to its animal nature, it will only achieve restlessness and strife, disaster and destruction for itself

A balanced personality can be only for that individual who has, to begin with, a clear conception and a correct judgement of himself. Whenever an individual forgets himself, he acts in a, manner unbecoming of the dignity of his birth, education, culture and social status like a mad man or a drunken fool. When a materialist thus works in ignorance of his own Divine status, he naturaly behaves as though he is an animal, insulting the Divine status of his own evolution.

*** Holding this view, these ruined souls of little intellegence and fierce deeds, come forth as the enemies of the world for its destruction.**

* एतां दृष्टिमवष्टभ्य नष्टात्मानोऽल्पबुद्धयः।
प्रभवन्त्युग्रकर्माणः क्षयाय जगतोऽहिताः॥ (Ge Ch XVI 9)

Once an individual refuses to recognize the " Divine Presence of Truth " embracing and underlying life, he will function in life as a self-centred and selfish entity, endlessly striving to eke out his own personal satisfactions from the material world. Seeking complete fulfilment in the gratification of his sensual urges he strives hard but discovers only a carping disappointment, a burning hunger and a sense of defeat in life. Lord Krishna in his infinite kindness, sympathises with such men and designates them " men of little intelligence ".

If a materialist does not want to believe in the Eternal Reality, and if others have to believe in some permanent Truth, why not allow equal freedom to both—the believers and the nonbelievers ? This would be a natural question that will arise in any man of ordinary intellect, if he be truly democratic and tolerant in his point of view. Anticipating such a doubt, a sincere doubt in a sincere student, Lord Krishna says, in the second line of the stanza, that when an individual *loses his faith in the* Eternal Reality, he becomes licentious at all levels of his expression. Prompted by selfish urges to seek and discover his fulfilment in life, he may perhaps ultimately bring about irrevocable disasters to his era. Historically the world today is going through the same predicament as declared and anticipated in the *Geeta.*

The gruesome ugliness of the inner nature in a pure materialist, as he struts about in the fields of his achievements, is clearly expressed in the following stanza:

> *** Filled with insatiable desires, full of hypocrisy, pride and arrogance, holding evil ideas through delusion, they work with impure resolves.**

Activities are not at all possible unless they are instigated by desires. Where desires have ended, the expression of dynamic life in achievements is impossible. And yet, to remain as victims of desires, is to become horrid machines of activity, vomiting out

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* काममाश्रित्य दुष्पूरं दम्भमानमदान्विताः।
मोहाद्गृहीत्वासद्ग्राहान्प्रवर्तन्तेऽशुचिव्रताः॥

(Ge. Ch. XVI–10)

into the world the inner posion of ego and egocentric passions. To sustain life only for the satisfaction of desires is unintelligent, for they have a knack of multiplying themselves as they are being satisfied one after another. They are hard to appease. Filled with insatiable desires, when a man uses his intelligence, abilities and knowledge, he naturally brings about an endless stream of disturbances in and around him.

Desire is but an expression of the ego when the seeker seeks satisfaction and fulfilment through sense enjoyments. When an individual is thus deluded in the misconception of his ego-vanity, negative tendencies such as hypocrisy, conceit and arrogance would naturally rise up, and somthered by them, the individual ceaselessly strives to satisfy the unending demands of his own unbridled desires.

Desire cannot come to the all-fulfilled. Desires can come only to one who fails to feel his own Infinitude and consequently express himself as the limited ego (*Jeeva*). Forgetting one's own Divine nature in one's identifications with the unreal things and values of life, one develops in oneself a hunger to enjoy peace and happiness. Naturally numerous desires arise in him, and seeking fulfilment of all such desires, he indulges in sense gratification.

The mental biography of the "diabolically fallen" (*Asura*) is complete in its sequence as stated in the stanza that the ego, desperately struggling to gain inner peace, must necessarily forsake all consideration for others, ignore all noble values of life, and enter into the fields of activity shamelessly intolerant, inconsiderate and even brutal. Drunk with passions, agitated with his own desires, he works in the field as a maniac, shedding blood and spreading death and disaster all round him in the community.

It is also interesting to note how Lord Krishna, while explaining the "diabolically fallen" (*Asura*) without directly saying so, is painting the picture of a materialist, who by nature is an atheist in thought and a tireless hunter of pleasure in action. Painting the concept of life in a confirmed materialist Lord Krishna continues:

> *** Giving themselves over to immeasurable cares ending only in their death and considering gratification of lust as their highest aim, they feel sure that that is all (that matters).**

Wedded to anxiety and care, such desperate men drag their life of futile endeavours along the corridors and sobs and sorrows to the silent court-yard of death ! In an ordinary life cares besiege the citadel of peace and joy, especially when hosts of powerful desires conquer the individuals. The struggles in acquiring and anxieties in preserving the acquired objects of desires are the content of all cares in life. To waste an entire life-time in such anxieties and to realize in the end only how miserably one has failed, is indeed a tragedy.

The philosophy of life that is accepted by the " diabolically fallen " is invariably the same wherever he be. The philosophy of the atheists (*Charvakas*) has been hinted at herein. To them satisfaction of their lusty nature is all the goal of their life and there is nothing beyond it (*Karma-upabhoga-parama*).

Generally such materialists are no fools; they are endowed with a sharp but rough and ready intellect. They do realize that a life dedicated to an endless hunting after sense-gratifications is a tragic way of living and that in such a scheme of existence, the individual is called upon to pay exorbitant prices for relatively insignificant gains. And yet they continue their life, seeking satisfaction of their lust. If you question them, their answer is that life is nothing but a series of such strifes. They know not of any other life, the contents of which are peace and joy. They are generally pessimistic, and since they scrupulously avoid thinking seriously about life, they invariably come to express suicidal tendencies and homicidal temperaments. According to them sorrows and cares alone constitute the fabric of life. They fail to discover any harmony or rhythm underlying the superficial disturbances in life. Entertaining no hope, either for themselves

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* चिन्तामपरिमेयां च प्रलयान्तामुपाश्रिताः ।
कामोपभोगपरमा एतावदिति निश्चिताः ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVI-11)

or for the others, they live with embittered hearts, revengefully meeting the happenings around them in the world. In unproductive exertions, they get wearied and disappointed and ultimately waste their powers only to die a miserable death.

With a view to bring vividly to the mind of the seeker a picture of such a materialist Lord Krishna, describes in the following stanza the activities of such an individual:

> * **Bound by a hundred ties of hope and given to lust and anger, they strive to obtain by unlawful means hoards of wealth for sensual enjoyments.**

When entangled by hundreds of desires, the mental and intellectual energies of men get dissipated. Such an individual becomes restless and impatient with things that happen around him, and soon loses his balance of mind and his sense of judgement. Irritated and constantly unhappy with himself and his environments, such a man is seen in life " given to yearnings and anger ". Whenever desires arise he pursues sense-fulfilments, and since in the world of competition often desire-fulfilments get throttled, his lust-urges get transformed into wild and passionate anger.

No doubt " they strive "; they tirelessly and diligently strive to satisfy their ever-increasing urges. To secure their quota of sensual enjoyments, they must necessarily acquire and preserve objects of sense-satisfaction from the world without. They do not seek happiness as such or peace as such; their's is an anxiety to quench an inexplicable thirst that they come to feel and a strange hunger they seem to suffer from. They have not the mental equipoise to investigate into their urges, to analyse them and to judge them properly. Madly they strive on to acquire and possess, and in their desperate anxiety to indulge and enjoy, they lose sight of the divine principles of existence and noble dictates of their conscience. They strive day and night to satisfy their inexhaustible passion, with wealth acquired and hoarded by all

* आशापाशशतैर्बद्धाः कामक्रोधपरायणाः ।
ईहन्ते कामभोगार्थमन्यायेनार्थसञ्चयान् ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVI-12)

known unjust means.

Though written some five thousand years ago, strangely enough, this portion of the description of the "diabolically fallen" reads as though it is a bitter but honest critisism of our own age. Thus, if students of the *Geeta* were to judge our era of brilliant scientific knowledge, material prosperity, secular achievements and political freedom, they will have to classify our era as of this "diabolically fallen" type. Amidst the bleating sirens of our blooming industries, the horrid thuds of our modern missiles, the devastating powers of Nature that we have discovered and released for our on destruction, we may not give our ears to the thundering truths declared by the wise-men of such a distant past; but sincere students of the *Geeta* cannot but perceive them and feel sad for the world and the age.

The most successful man in a competitive world is he who lives in constant consciousness of what he has already acquired, and remembers his day-to-day ambitions to acquire and possess more and more of the wealth of the world. And the ludicrous paradox in the "philosophy of possession" is that the more one has, the more one craves for. No material-wealth-hunter has ever declared: "I have this much now, that will do". But on the other hand, when one gets drunk with the vanity of possession, one's shameless cry is:

> *** "To-day this has been gained by me; this desire I shall obtain; this is mine, and this wealth also shall be mine in future."**

The game of desires is an endless gamble. The more one possesses, the more one is tempted to strive to possess still more. Each time a man strives to acquire something, his desire is to feel his full share of satisfaction. But invariably, his experience is that he is not fully satisfied, and in his disappointment, he thirsts for more and more possessions.

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* इदमद्य मया लब्धमिमं प्राप्स्ये मनोरथम् ।
इदमस्तीदमपि मे भविष्यति पुनर्धनम् ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVI–13)

Since the objects of one's desire are limited and the desirers are many, the materialist's attitude to his own fellow beings will be one that closely follows the law of the jungle.

> * "That ememy has been slain by me, and others also I shall destroy. I am the Lord, I am the enjoyer; I am perfect, powerful and happy."

All businessmen in the world, unknown to themselves, constantly chant this stanza in their heart-of-hearts. "I destroyed one competitor in the market, and now I must destory the remaining two competitors also"... "In fact what can those poor men do to stop me from my doing what I want ?".... "Because there is none equal to me in any respect....I am the Lord. I enjoy. I am the most successful man. I am strong in influence, in my capital, in my business connections and in my bank balances. And personally I am healthy ....." This in short, is the ego's song of success that is ever hummed in the heart of a true materialist. Under the spell of this Satanic lullaby, the higher instincts and the diviner urges in man go to a sleep of intoxication.

Deluded by misconceptions of himself, such a man of sickly bloated conceit, looks at the world through a mind distorted with vanity and wrongly judges the world and his relationship with it.

> ** "I am rich and well born. Who else is equal to me ? I will sacrifice, I will give (alms, money), I will rejoice" Thus they are deluded by ignorance.

Self-exiled from society, such a person, lives in false castles of vanity, suffering innumerable psychological privations. He gloats that he will, by his ritualism, even order the Gods to save him and that he shall with his gifts purchase the whole world.

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* असौ मया हतः शत्रुर्हनिष्ये चापरानपि।
ईश्वरोऽहमहं भोगी सिद्धोहं बलवान्सुखी॥

(Ge. Ch. XVI-14)

** आढ्योऽभिजनवानस्मि कोऽन्योऽस्ति सदृशो मया।
यक्ष्ये दास्यामि मोदिष्ये इत्यज्ञानविमोहिता:॥

(Ge. Ch. XVI-15)

And thus " glorified by the world, served by God, I shall rejoice in the world...... " Such are some of the maddest ravings of his restless heart in the dark depths of his ignorance.

When an ego-centric individual, who has thus sold himself to sense-indulgence, spends his time seeking his gratification from the world of objects, his mind becomes ever *unsteady*. The mind of an indulgent sensualist soon learns to empty its powers of concentration and exhausts itself in its own hallucinations, fancies and imaginations.

Therefore the Lord syas:

> * **Bewildered by many a fancy, entangled in the snare of delusion, addicted to the gratification of lust, they fall into a foul hell.**

If the individual's mind, as a result of its false philosophy, gets dissipated in sapless dreams, his intellect also is in a sad condition. His power of judgement and discrimination is caught up in a web of delusions and false values. His intellect, cut off from its permanent moorings, has thereafter no platform of its own to spring from and to come to a correct judgement and evaluation of life. It fails to recognize the permanent harmony of life, but recognizes only its own ego-centric vanities. Life looked at through such a disturbing equipment naturally gives a distorted view. When an individual's intellect is thus clouded, his mind *gets agitated, and his sense-organs, which are the instruments* through which the *mind-intellect* has to express itself, certainly behave erratically. Naturally therefore, such an individual becomes a victim of lust and sense-gratifications.

We need not be great philosophers to understand that such *an individual, tired physically,* upset mentally and confused intellectually, lives here in a self-created Hell, distributing his own personality-contents of woes to others around him. A man can make a Heaven of Hell or a Hell of Heaven by the harmony or

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* अनेकचित्तविभ्रान्ता मोहजालसमावृताः ।
प्रसक्ताः कामभोगेषु पतन्ति नरकेऽशुचौ ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVI–16)

ord in himself. A subjectively shattered personality cannot peace or fulfilment in any situation. Even if the environ-ts are conducive, he discovers in himself methods of upsetting n by his own inner sufferings.

If a single individual who has these false values, discovers himself a sad world of sorrow, even in the midst of happy oundings, we can very well understand what the condition e world would be when a good majority of us are men, having arious degrees, the above qualities. Hell and Heaven are rmined by the amount of discord or harmony that we success- bring about in our inner make up.

When the above mentioned type of individual enters the field ocial work or national service, he does not always do so with a Yagna-spirit. In spite of very many of the leaders and workers ing hard for the upliftment of the country, we find that the d of our age is falling away from plenty, prosperity and peace. n a man of the "diabolically-fallen" type reaches any field ctivity, in spite of his vociferous claims to selfless service, he capable of it because of the very nature of his personality and acter. Such so-called friends of society can at best perform *Yagna* only in name. Unconsciously their actions will be oned by their vanity, coloured by their sensuality, distorted heir arrogance and generally polluted by their false philosophy. a result of all their actions, sorrow alone will be the result in community.

> * **Self-conceited, stubborn and filled with pride and intoxication of wealth, *they perform sacrifices in name* (only) out of *ostentation, contrary to scriptural* ordinances.**

Yagna need not necessarily be considered as *the elaborate* alism described in the *Vedas*. But it can be *interpreted here* he *Geeta* style as a co-operative *endeavour in which each in-*

ात्मसंभाविताः स्तब्धा धनमानमदान्विताः ।
जन्ते नामयज्ञैस्ते दम्भेनाविधिपूर्वकम् ॥ *(Ge. Ch. XVI-17)*

dividual puts in his best into the activity of life, as an oblation to propitiate the potential goodness in existence, which, when invoked, is to be distributed equally to all. This spirit of selfless effort in the service of mankind was described by Lord Krishna as the greatest *Yagna;* work is worship.

Once egoism takes possession of an individual, he steadily sinks to the ugliest depths of animalism. Drunk with passions, he abdicates all the dignity of a cultured man and behaves as a beast strutting about precariously on its hind legs ! Such a biological freak who is physiologically a man, but temperamentally an animal, is the type that is now being discussed as the "diabolically fallen" (*Asura*).

*** Given over to egoism, power, haughtiness, lust and anger, these malicious people hate Me residing in their own bodies and in those of others.**

Enumerating the inner contents of such an individual, Lord Krishna says that he is full of egoism, brutal strength, arrogance, passion and anger. Any one of these is sufficient to pull one down to the depths of depravity, where as the Lord characterizes the *Asura*-type of man as having all these qualities together. Not only has he got these qualities—and who does not have them?—but unlike an evolver, the *Asuric* man comes to pin his faith on these qualities, and he struggles to discover his fulfilment in the expression of these tendencies only.

In case an individual lives these values, what exactly is the harm?—this is a question that is often asked by intelligent young men when they are advised by the elders not to live, yielding readily to their low urges and ugly temptations. The *Geetacharya* explains here that the consequences of disrespecting all cultural values and living an uncultured ego-centric existence of passions and desires would be nothing short of total destruction of life.

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* अहंकारं बलं दर्पं कामं क्रोधं च संश्रिताः।
मामात्मपरदेहेषु प्रद्विषन्तोऽभ्यसूयकाः॥

(Ge. Ch. XVI–18)

Persons who are entertaining the above-mentioned attitudes, ignore the sanctity of life, and without any compunction whatsoever desecrate it. They grow malignant and in order to satisfy the low urges of egoism, they come to hate Me residing in their own bodies and in those of others. The sacred-Life (the *Paramatma*) does not come out to express its full-play when blanketed by the low sensous urges. Ethical values, earlier described in the chapter, are all disciplines of the thought-life whereby, a mind so tuned up, becomes the right instrument to serve faithfully the seeker of the Self. Unethical values and immoral intentions choke the great Melody of Life and reduce it to disconcerting, purposeless noise, shattering peace and contetment in one's own bosom as also in other's bosoms.

The fall in evolution suffered by such thoughtless materialists as a result of their own false and foul actions is being traced in the following two stanzas of the *Geeta* :

> *** These cruel haters are the worst among men in the world ; I hurl these evil doers for ever into the womb of the demons only.**

Specimens of this "Diabolically fallen" type of men are characterized here in a spirit of loving despair by the Lord, as the most degraded of men in the world. They are malicious and cruel—malicious against the dignity of themselves, and cruel to the living beings around. They are, says the Lord, thrown by me perpetually into the wombs of the demons. Here Lord Krishna has identified himself with the Law of Action and Reaction—wrong action leaves behind wrong tendencies, and propelled by such negative tendencies the personality in an individual, after his death in this physical structure, demands an appropriate field of existence. An *Asuric* individual should necessarily discover his fulfilment, only in an *Asuric* environment. Therefore the Law of Action and Reaction orders that such cruel men again and agian reach similar wombs until the sheer horror of their experiences brings

* तानहं द्विषतः क्रूरान्संसारेषु नराधमान् ।
क्षिपाम्यजस्रमशुभानासुरीष्वेव योनिषु ॥

(Ge Ch XVI-19)

home to them a sudden realization of the follies and futilities in followng such a low tempo of life.

Tracing the line of fall of an *Asura* type of man Lord Krishna says that an individual having repeatedly reached, as a result of his previous life, the same *Asuric* environment, life after life, fails to realize the Infinite joys of the Self. Such men never climb the heights of cultural beauty but slowly sink lower and lower to reach the bottom grades of beings.

> *** Entering into demoniacal wombs; deluded in birth after birth and not attaining Me, they thus fall, O Kauntheya, into a condition still lower than that.**

Deluded by false desires and wearied with false activities to fulfil those wrong desires, some become confused in intellect and totally confounded in their reasoning. Such people lose all divine perspective and become monstrous in thier activities, expressing nothing but their demoniac sensuous nature at all times.

The actions undertaken in the present leave their impressions on the mind and order the future desires and thoughts in the individual. Out of vain actions, only negative *Vasanas* can arise, and they can only thicken the dull-witted stupidities of the intellect. When an individual has lived in this ditch of falsehood and impurity, he cannot become any nobler than a monster even in the succeeding embodiments that he will have to take.

As a contrast to this *Asuric*-culture, we are shown in the following stanzas how men-of-wisdom feel and act. In order to make the contrast vivid we find the following pair of stanzas in the *Bh.Geeta* wherein both extremes of human nature are presented side by side.

> **** Of vain hopes, of vain actions, of vain knowledge, and senseless, they verily are possessed of the delusive**

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* आसुरीं योनिमापन्ना मूढा जन्मनि जन्मनि ।
मामप्राप्यैव कौन्तेय ततो यान्त्यधमां गतिम् ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVI-20)

nature of *Rakshasas* and *Asuras*.

> *** But the *Mahatmas* (great-souls) O Partha, partaking of My Divine nature, worship Me with a single mind, knowing Me as the imperishable source of all beings.**

The great-souls possessed of the Divine nature, desiring the Infinite, seek the Immortal Self "through single-pointed Self-application" They, as the true children of the Hindu culture, understand the Divine-Principle as the "Source of all beings" and so cannot but respect every other member of the society as they would respect themselves, they "know Me to be the origin of all beings". If the present generation is not able to understand and appreciate this spiritual socialism, which is the only panacea for all the ills of the world, it is because of the predominance of the *Asuric* forces pointed out earlier. But the great-souls "worship Me with single-pointed mind". How ?

> **** Always glorifying Me, striving, firm in vows, prostrating before Me, and always steadfast, they worship Me with devotion.**

To adore an ideal with reverence and devotion and to sing its glories at all times, is the act that opens up the mind to appreciate fully the ideal one has learned to glorify Thus, the silent adoration of society by the social-workers or the steady flow of love that beams out from a man of knowledge for the entire kingdom of living, constitue a greater and more potent type of *Kirtan* than the type usually indulged in by the noisy crowds that assemble for a short period every day only to return

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** मोघाशा मोघकर्माणो मोघज्ञाना विचेतसः ।
राक्षसीमासुरीं चैव प्रकृतिं मोहिनीं श्रिताः ॥
(Ge. Ch. IX–12)

* महात्मनस्तु मां पार्थ दैवीं प्रकृतिमाश्रिताः ।
भजन्त्यनन्यमनसो ज्ञात्वा भूतादिमव्ययम् ॥
(Ge Ch. IX–13))

** सततं कीर्तयन्तो मां यतन्तश्च दृढव्रताः ।
नमस्यन्तश्च मां भक्त्या नित्ययुक्ता उपासते ॥
(Ge. Ch. IX–14)

to their old dubious ways of living. The majority of people believe that some specific routine acts of devotional flavour, pursued physically for a short period of time on particular days of the week is all their part of the game. The rest is for their imaginary gods to cook and bring in front of them, dressed to taste! This absurd idea has nothing to do with the Science of Self-Perfection, of which philosophy constitutes theoretical aspects and religion constitutes practical aspects.

Constant and conscious effort is unavoidable if an individual is to get himself hauled out from his present rut of wrong thinking and false valuations of life and living. The disharmony he experiences in life and the wrong notes that are sung by the situations in life upon the harp of his heart, are all due to the maladjustments in his instrument-of-experiences. Their re-adjustment calls for continuous vigilance, non-stop self-application and sincere pursuit.

Of course, while thus striving for self-redemption, vacillations caused by instinctive biological temptations would often reach the seeker to whisper in his ears and make him eat the "Forbidden Fruit". But at such moments of strong temptations, he must make a firm resolve to reject the false and to walk steadily the Path-of-the-Real. And "Devotion to Me, the origin of beings, the Immutable" is the way for the deluded ego to walk the Path-of-the Real. This is brought to a successful culmination only by the process of detaching oneself from the non-self conditionings.

This withdrawal of ourselves from our misconceived indentifications and the final re-discovery of our infinite Divine potentialities, through our constant devotion to the Self, can be achieved only by those among us who "are steadfast and worship Me". To keep in the mind an alert and vigilant flow of thoughts in our adoration for the nature of the Self as the substratum of the entire Universe and the Essence in all beings, is the ture worship that can open up the buds of our ego-centric lives into blossoms of God-men, wafting the fragrance of Perfection around. To adore Him in all visions, to recognize Him in all situations, to feel Him with each thought, is to live in a constant remembrance of the Self, and

therefore such people "worship the Self through wisdom-sacrifice" (*Janna Yajna*).

> * Others, by offering the "Wisdom-sacrifice" also worship Me, regarding Me as One, as distinct, as manifold—Me, who in all forms faces up everywhere.

Jnana Yagna has no ritualism. It is a constant attempt on the part of the performer to see, in and through the experienced names and forms, the expression and vitality of the One Conscious Principle, the Self. The seeker here, practising *Jnana Yagna* has understood the significance of the *Vedantic* assertion that the Immutable Self pervades all, penetrating everything, and in Its homogeneous web of existence, It holds together the phenomenal multiplicity and their variegated inter-actions.

Chocolates made by different manufacturers, irrespective of their shapes and colours, flavours and prices, are all chocolates, and therefore, their essential nature of sweetness is common to all of them; and the child who is seeking the sweetness of the chocolates will enjoy them, whatever be their shape, size or packing.

Similarly, the seeker of the Self watches for, observes and detects Its experessions. Whatever be the setting in which diamonds are held together, to the diamond merchant all of them are diamonds, and he evaluates them according to their brilliance and not according to the design or beatuty of the ornaments.

A man of Realization moves about in the world, seeing his own Self, expressed through every movement and action, word and thought that cluster around him at all times. Just as one light in the midst of a thousand mirrors comes to provide crores of reflections, so too, the one centred in the Self, when steps out into the world, sees everywhere his own Self dancing, shooting glances at him from all around at once, thrilling him always with the homogeneous ecstasy of perfection and bliss.

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* ज्ञानयज्ञेन चाप्यन्ये यजन्तो मामुपासते ।
एकत्वेन पृथक्त्वेन बहुधा विश्वतोमुखम् ॥

(Ge. Ch. IX-15)

In the sparkle of the eyes, in the smile of a friend, in the growl of the enemy, in the harsh words of jealousy and in the soft tones of love, in the heat and in the cold, in success and in failure — among men, among animals, amidst the trees and in the company of the inert—everywhere he successfully gains the auspicious vision of the Supreme, either as the Existence Pure or as *Knowledge Absolute* or as *Bliss Infinite !!* To watch for and discover the smile of the Divine through the trellis of names and forms is to live in the constant spirit of *Jnana Yagna.*

In the beginning, this attempt at seeing the Self is a conscious act, not without its unpleasant strain. But as the seeker develops in his own spiritual cognition of the Self, the Awareness Divine within him, it becomes easy for him to recognize the One Self splashing Itself upon the myriad forms of Its own effulgent glory: " Me, who in all forms faces up everywhere ".

According to *Vedanta* Self-realization is not at all complete if the realized one can keep his composure and equanimity only in solitude and silence; if he recognizes and experiences the Divine only at some rare moments of his transcendental experience, then he is not the man-of-wisdom glorified by the *Rishis* of the *Upanishads.* A man-of-true-knowlege is he to whom the Self alone is the Truth within, without, and everywhere. " The one pervades all and nothing pervades It. " To him a market place of tensions is as much a conducive place for recognizing the Self as the quiet mountain valleys and their deep caves of infinite silence. With his eyes open, he, from the balcony of the Infinite in himself, gazes out to experience nothing but his own Self everywhere.

In my legs as well as in my hands I pervade equally at all moments. I know I am there. To say that this knowledge makes my hands and legs disappear, as mist disappears at sunrise, is sheer lunacy and not the assertion of a true scientist. Just as I permeate, exist, enjoy, and experience in and through every little portion of my body, all through my waking hours, so too, the man-of-realization realizes at all times, his own Self premeating the entire Universe in his Infinite domain.

Vedanta preaches the recognition of Divinity and the ex-

perience of the Infinite in and through life. It is not a passing experience lived at any accidental moment. Just as the knowledge acquired by an individual through his education keeps him constant company at all times and in all conditions, even so, nay, much more powerfully, much more intimately, much more irredeemably, the "knower-of-the-Self becomes the Self"

17

A Prescription for Perfection

Only a Philosophy wedded to Religion can hope to succeed in the modern world and only such a combination is capable of solving problems of this age. Philosophy can point out only the road. It is only a theory. Religion alone can verify the theory and bring us to full realization of our true nature. "Know Thyself" is the call of philosophy, but like a doctor who merely diagnoses the case and prescribes the cure, it leaves you exactly where you were — a little wiser perhaps — but certainly not a trifle better. And so religion has to step in and dispense the prescription. If the doctor is efficient the prescription will be good; so also, if the philosophy is right, the religion will do good and be effective.

Today man's personality is shattered. He stands between two worlds — one dying and the other struggling to be born. When the baby is born, will it be a monster or an angel ? He alone can choose. Man is the maker of his own world, and if today the world is an ugly place, it is because he himself is ugly. Cleanse your face with the soft towel of religion, and you will find that the brilliance in the world is but a reflection of the brilliance within you.

This self-cleansing becomes difficult for the average man, because it is a subjective process, wherein each has to cleanse

Individual perfection is the means for the total perfection and for this man must regenerate. He must have an ideology in life by which man individually and collectively can grow to be healthy human beings. All Religions are built upon such refreshing ideologies. It supplies the higher eternal values of life to its followers and nourishes them with its various techniques till each individual absorbs them into himself.

The values that Religions provide are based on eternal truths of life and therefore are the permanent values of the changing world. The world may change, but the eternal values will always remain the same. They were good for our ancients; they were equally good for the people in the middle ages; they were again found good for the communities of the last century. Surely they are good for the present century also. They are ever one and the same.

It is true that over the centuries many changes have come about in the pattern of life lived by man, but they are mostly changes in the non-essentials of life. In the past, perhaps, our forefathers ate food from the hand, today we eat from a plate. They ate food under a tree, today we eat food sitting in lavish dining halls. They ate food listening to the chirpping of the birds, while today, we have radios bleating their programmes. In whatever environments we eat, these are all non-essentials; they are all of changing nature too. The only thing that can never change is the fact that man must eat to live. This is an eternal fact and was true then and is equally so now. All the other details like, how I must eat, in what form the food should be prepared, with what instrument I must eat are all non-essentials which undergo many changes from time to time.

In the human being too all the changes have come about only in the non-essentials. The barbarous men of old, whom we pity today, also had their heads on their shoulders, and the legs at the other end of the trunk ! The barbarous cave-man who did nothing spectacular other than moving about the jungle in search of food, also ate his food with his mouth. Because we are modern, can we change or modernise our biological functions say, eat by the ear or breathe by the eyes ?

Again, there are some fundamental things in the world also, which however ancient they may be, continue to exist and function in the same old way. In about 12th century we discovered electricity; that does not mean that electricity was not there in the 9th century or the 1st century. At all times electricity was there, because, it is a fundamental enregy that is in the cosmos. So too the gravitational force discovered by Newton. Even before Newton discovered it, it was there and was functioning in the same way as it is even today.

Similarly, in human life also, there are certain unquestionable fundamental values. Wherever man lived these fundamental values, they made him healthier to face the world outside, even if it be riddled with endless tragedies. If the world around him was happy, then these values helped him to become healthier to enjoy the happiness intelligently. There are certain fundamental rules that govern the inner health of man and these are called by the srciptures as "Fundamental Values"

The values seem to be different, at least in emphasis, in different religions, and a student who labours to study various religions may find that one religion emphasised one set of ideas and another religion a different set of deals. Buddhism says one thing, Hinduism says another, Islam and Christianity says yet another. But, if one intelligently starts to think over them, one can discover that the "fundamental principle" is one and the same though the language and the emphasis are different. Just as two doctors would prescribe to the same patient, on separate occations two seemingly different prescriptions, for the same disease, and yet, those who understand the Science of Medicine know that both the prescriptions are same from the point of view of the illness ; only in detail are they apparently different.

Similarly, the ethical and moral values that religions prescribe are all rules of conduct by which man can develop his personality integrity and gain his inward health, with which he may enjoy the world more and also develop the strength and courage to meet his problems in life. It is true, no doubt, that such men who live all these great values of life can only be few in a society, but those few will soon grow up to such a stature in themselves that

they will be leading the world with an irresistable secret spiritual power of their own. It is always such men of heroic inner personality, who have been guiding the generations and initiating new civilisation of head and heart in the world.

Thus we find in the *Bhagavad Geeta* twenty-six qualities described, to give us a complete picture of the nature of a man of "Divine State". These qualities are enumerated to serve as a guide to all those who thirst to become perfect. To the extent we are able to reorganize our way of life and change our vision of the world around us on the above lines, to that extent we shall economize our energies, that are often wasted in idle pursuits. To respect and live these twenty-six values of life completely, is to assure ourselves of the right way of living. They are :

> * **Fearlessness, purity of heart, steadfastness in the *Yoga*-of-Knowledge, alms-giving, control of the senses, sacrifice, study of the *Shastras* austerity and straight forwardness......**

Herein we find an almost exhaustive list of the noble traits in a cultured man living the Hindu way-of-life—a life wherein he accepts and lives these values of life while meeting the work-a-day-world. And in the enumeration of these qualities fearlessness (A-*bhayam*) comes first. Fear is generated in one, only when one is in a field which is clouded by one's ignorance. Fear is an expression of *Avidya*. Where there is Knowledge there is fearlessness. By placing this quality of fearlessness at the head of the list, with the unsung music of sheer suggestiveness, the divine *Acharya*, Lord Krishna is indicating that true ethical perfection in one is directly proportional to the spiritual evolution attained by the individual.

PURITY OF THE HEART: No amount of external discipline can ever supply the student with the positive dynamism

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* अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिर्ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः ।
दानं दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आर्जवम् ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVI - 1)

which is the core of all moral living The *Geeta* invariably preaches a dynamic Religion positive both in its theory and practice. Lord Krishna *is not satisfied by a docile generation of* passive goodness, but he wants the members of the Hindu society not only to live among themselves the higher values of life, but also to burst forth with the positive glow of righteousness and bathe the entire generation of man with the light of truth and virtue—virtue which implies honesty of intentions and purity of motives.

This ethical purity at the level of the heart cannot be brought about as long as the human mind is turned outward on to the flesh. Only when the mind is constantly held up in unison with the Infinite Song of the Soul, can it discover in itself the necessary courage to renounce its low appetites, clinging attachments and the consequent foul motives gurgling from within itself. Devotion to knowledge (*Jnana Yoga*) is thus the postive way to persuade the mind to give up all its low temptations. When the child is playing with a delicate glass curio, to save the precious object the parents generally offer a piece of chocolate ; and the little child anxious to get the chocolate puts the precious thing away. Similarly, a mind that is awakened to the serener joys of the Self will naturally never hang on to the sensuous *objects and their fleeting joys*

In order to discover the required amount of " steady devotion to knowledge ", *charity, restraint of the senses*, and *sacrifice* are the three techniques by which an individual successfully tunes up his inner equipments of knowledge.

Charity must come from one's own sense of abundance. Charity springs only from a sense of oneness in us—oneness between the giver and the recipient. Unless one is able to identify onself with others, one will not feel this noble urge to share all that one has with others who have not got it. Thus *Daana* is born out of an ability to restrain one's instincts of acquisition and aggrandizement, and to replace them with the spirit of sacrifice ; it consists in sharing with others the objects of the world that one possesses.

If Charity (*Daana*) develops in one the ability to detach oneself from the wealth that one possesses and the kindness to share it

with others who are poorer, then we can say that the control of the sense-organs (*Dama*) is the application of the same spirit of sacrifice to one's subjective life. To give a complete licence for indulgence to the sense-organs is to waste unproductively the total human vitality. To economize in the expenditure of energy through the sense-organs in the field of sense-objects is to discover an extra amount of untapped energy. This energy can be made use of as the motive power behind the mind-and-intellect that is set on a flight to the higher realms of meditation. To keep the mind tuned up-to the Self, a subtle energy is called forth, and it will be discovered within ourselves when we control our sense indulgence. Without *Daana* and *Dama* the pilgrimage to Truth is merely a dream.

Without a regular prayer-cum-pooja, which is a substitute for *Yagna* available for us now, control of the sense-organs will be impossible, and without this control the spirit of charity cannot develop. In the absence of both *Daana* and *Dama* spiritual experience of the Self, the recognition of the Divine within us is impossible. It is interesting to note that each subsequent term in this list is logically connected with the one indicated immediately previous to it.

Study of scriptural literature (*Swadhyaya*) daily, in measured quantities, will provide the necessary inspiration to live the Divine life in our day-to-day existence. But the scriptural study is indicated here by a very significant term *Swadhyaya—Swa+Adhyayana* meaning self-study. In its pregnant import, it suggets that the study of the scriptures should not be merely an intellectual appreciation, but as the student studies the text books, he must be able to, observe, analyse and understand the truth of what he is studying with reference to his own life. Regular studies coupled with regular practice (*Yajna*) would give us the courage to live in self-control of the sense-organs, which in its turn can supply us with the steadiness in meditation for realizing the Highest.

A person who is living all the above mentioned virtues, does not dissipate his energies through worldly indulgences. All those conscious self-denials at the body level help to conserve more and more energy within himself, which when he applies in self-development is called *Tapas*.

The "Divinely good" person is upright in his thoughts, emotions and general conduct. Crookedness has a self-destructive influence upon our personality. Actions belying one's own true intentions and motives, convictions and aspirations, realizations and discriminations would result in the crookedness of one's personality. He who is indulging in this way-of-life would thereby develop in himself a split personality and will soon lose the glow of effectiveness and be impoverished in the powers of personal grit.

Continuing, Lord Krishna enumerates the mental contents of the Godly type of men.

> * **Harmlessness, truth, absence of anger, renunciation, peacefulness, absence of crookedness, compassion to beings, uncovetousness, gentleness, modesty, absence of fickleness……**

Harmlessness (*Ahimsa*), does not consist so much in not causing any physical injury to beings in the physical world as in not contemplating to do any harm to any living creature in the world around. Physically *Ahimsa* is simply impossible. To continue living, some kind of physical harm or other has to be brought about, it is unavoidable. But even while bringing about unavoidable disturbances around ourselves, if our motives are pure and clean, the harm so brought about is not regarded as injury (*Himsa*).

TRUTH (*Sathyam*) : We have already discussed almost the same thing while discussing the last term in the previous stanza, "uprightness".

AN EVEN TEMPER (*Akrodha*) : *Sometimes it is rendered* as "angerlessness", which is not very accurate. A better rendering would be the ability to check at the right time waves of anger as they mount up in our bosom, so that we do not manifest anger

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* अहिंसा सत्यमक्रोधस्त्यागः शान्तिरपैशुनम्।
दया भूतेष्वलोलुप्त्वं मार्दवं ह्रीरचापलम्॥

(Ge. Ch. XVI-2

in our actions. It will be almost unnatural to expect the mind to become incapable of anger. But no emotion should be allowed to overwhelm us to such a degree as to render us almost impotent by it. This anger arises out of an insufferable impatience. In short, *Akrodha* does not mean " without anger " but only " keeping, as far as possible, an even temper ".

If without respect to truth, we cannot live in the spirit of *Ahimsa*, so also without the spirit of renunciation (*Tyaga*) an even temper is but a vain hope.

If the seeker is capable of living, conscious of Truth, harming none, keeping an even temper and in a spirit of renunciation in spite of all disturbing environments and happenings around, then he is the one who shall come to experience peace and quietitude in himself. If an individual can be calm in the midst of a stormy life and outrageous circumstances, such an individual can successfully keep his inward balance and intellectual poise.

A seeker who is trying to reach a fuller and more exhaustive self-expression, should develop such an inward harmony that his speech should echo the fragrance of his soul. A speech with softness of tone, with clarity of expression, with honesty of conviction, which can bring a clear picture into the listener's mind with no veiled meaning, and overflowing with sincerity, devotion and love, becomes an autobiography of the seeker's personality. The ugliness or beauty of the tongue is ordered by the personality behind it. A shattered entity will seek self-gratification in malicious scandal-mongering, whereas a soft sincere tongue can often become more powerful than the most destructive missile.

TENDERNESS TOWARDS BEINGS : In a society, in general, it is not reasonable for a seeker to expect that all would keep up to the ideal that he himself maintains. There will be imperfections around. But to recognize, in and through those imperfections, the infinite beauty of life expressed, is the secret of enduring tenderness in all Saints and Sages. Love alone can discover infinite amount of tenderness in us. Unless we train ourselves to see the beauty of life pulsating through even wretched

hearts and ugly characters, we will fail to bring out tenderness to sweeten life within and without.

An average man has got an endless thirst and an insatiable hunger for sense indulgence. To remain in self-control without endless sense-hunger is meant by the term "uncovetousness". In the subjective life, to live "without covetousness" means controlling sense organs from excessive indulgence in sense enjoyments.

The conduct of such a self-disciplined man will be both 'gentle" and "modest". These are not so much the particular disciplines of the individual, as the resultant beauty and harmony which an individual brings' forth, as the fragrance of his culture in his contacts with the world outside. These two qualities are best seen in one who has established himself in all the above-mentioned noble qualities.

Restlessness of the mind and unsteadiness of character (*chapalam*) get reflected in the activities of an indesciplined person. The body shows up the condition of the mind. A constant restlessness, a sudden outburst of activity, an immodest shaking of the body and voluptuous expressions on the face are all noticed only in individuals who have not yet cultivated a noble character and a purposeful personality. These when seen in a child may be considered to enhance its beauty, but as the individual grows, the real beauty in him lies in his mastery over himself as declared by his actions.

Acharya Shankara explains *Achapalam* as not "not to speak or move hands and legs in vain". This is an extension of the meaning of the term, and implies a promptitude and economy of physical energy in any efficient activity. Unnecessarily exhausting the muscles with indecisive movements and thoughtless exertions is a sign of weakness in the personality. Such individuals are extremely imaginative and miserably weak in their intellectual calibre and emotional vitality.

In the following stanza Lord Krishna, while painting the nature of the heart of a man of Divine State, covers with minimum

strokes the mental attitude, the intellectual calibre and the spiritual glow of such a man :

> * **Vigour, forgiveness, fortitude, purity, absence of hatred, absence of pride—these belong to the one born of the Divine State, O Bharatha.**

TEJA : This is not a mere physical glow of complexion produced by good food and ample rest. It is not just an exterior beauty arising out of careful tending of the physical structure and planned nourishing of the pads of flesh in the body. The glow of spirituality is not literally a painted glow around the head, glimmering as a ring of fire. The brilliancy of his intellect, the twinkling joy in his eyes, the thrilling fragrance of peace around, the serene poise in his activities, the effulgence of his love for all, the light of joy that ever shines forth from the inner-most depths of his being — these constitute the irresistible attraction of the personality of the sage who, with abundant energy, serves all and discovers for himself a fulfilment in that service.

PATIENCE (*Kshama*) : The context in which the word is used here increases the depth of its meaning. It is not merely an ability to live patiently through some minor physical or mental inconvenience, when insulted or injured by others. It is a sublte boldness that is displayed by a man while facing the most powerful oppositions and provoking situations.

When an individual daringly meets life, he cannot always expect happy situations, favourable circumstances and conducive arrangement of chances in his field of activity. Ordinarily a weak man suddenly feels dejected and is tempted to leave his field of work when it is only half done. Many lose their chances of achieving the highest and desert the field of action almost at the moment when victory is round the corner. In order to stick to his guns, man needs a spiritual energy to nurture and nourish his exhausted and fatigued mental and intellectual morale, and

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* तेजः क्षमा धृतिः शौचमद्रोहो नातिमानिता ।
भवन्ति संपदं दैवीमभिजातस्य भारत ॥

(Ge. Ch. XVI–3)

this inner energy welling up in one's own well-integrated personality is "fortitude" (*Dhriti*) The strength of faith, conviction of the goal, consistency of purpose, vivid perception of the ideal and a bold spirit of sacrifice cultivated diligently — all these form the source from which "fortitude" trickles down to remove exhaustion fatigue and despair.

PURITY (*Shaucham*): The word not only indicates the inner-purity — purity of thoughts and motives — but also suggests the purity of environments, cleanliness of habits and personal belongings. As a result of an over-emphasis on subjective purity, we find today in our society an utter neglect of external purity. Clean clothes and civic habits have both become rare in our society. Even the devotee-class is unmindful about these, although the Hindu religion emphasizes that purity and cleanliness are unavoidable disciplines for a seeker.

HARMLESSNESS (*Ahimsa*): This is a virtue already explained in the previous stanza. Here the same virtue *Adroha* is repeated not only for the purpose of emphasis but also to indicate a slightly different shade of meaning. The term here means *not only an "absence of hatred" but "absence of even a vague* desire *to* injure any living creature". Just as an individual can never have, even in his dream, any idea of injuring himself, so also a true seeker, in his recognition of the Oneness in all living creatures, does come *to feel that to injure any other is to injure* himself.

ABSENCE OF OVER-PRIDE (*Na-ati-manita*) · To give up one's exaggerated notions of self-honour is to relieve oneself immediately from thousands of avoidable excitements and responsibilities. *Life is as light as a feather to one who has renounced* his over-exaggerated pride whereas to one like Coriolanus, life becomes a heavy cross to be carried painfully, as it mercilessly cuts through the living flesh on his shoulders.

On hearing such an exhaustive enumeration of the qualities of the good, it will be natural for a seeker to feel desperate t know which category he himself might belong to. The ethi beauty is painted here neither with the purpose of sending t

good to an eternal heaven nor with the idea of damning the vicious to a perpetual hell !! Ethical virtues are the intelligent means of reviving man's exhausted energy and fatigued spirit to live. By living these healthy values of a righteous life, the individual unshackles his psychological personality from its self-made entanglements.

At this moment we all, as members of a society, are fully engaged in the standard way of doing things, in the standard methods adopted by others according to the fashion of the times. Since we live as we are living, we are what we are. If we want to lift our life into a greater ambit, we have to change our ways of living. And it is not impossible for any one to change if he really wishes to.

A girl after marriage suddenly becomes more responsible, and her old ways of life undergo a change. A boy becomes a middle-aged man and then an old man, and at each stage, the old ways of life change yielding place to new. So too, if you want to gain a hold on the spiritual path, you have to change. Without changing the old values of life and ways of living, a new dimension of life and living cannot be achieved. Therefore a slight change in the outlook, and living up to a set of noble values are the requirements to start on the path leading to the "Divine State" of self-perfection.

Therefore, the following five continuous stanzas from the *Geeta* together lists twenty qualities which are the intellectual and emotional attributes, moral attitudes and ethical principles unavoidable to an individual seeker who is anxious to achieve spiritual evolution. They are :

> *** Humility, modesty, non-injury, forgiveness, uprightness, service to the teacher, purity, steadfastness, self-control.........**

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* अमानित्वमदम्भित्वमहिंसा क्षान्तिरार्जवम् ।
आचार्योपासनं शौचं स्थैर्यमात्मविनिग्रहः ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIII-8)

HUMILITY: *It means* absence of self-esteem; MODESTY—the virtue of not proclaiming one's own greatness; NON-INJURY—*not harming* any living being *mainly* by our own vicious intentions and feelings; SERVICE TO THE TEACHER—*not merely physical, but the* real service to the teacher is an attempt on the part of the student to seek a *mental* and *intellectual* identity with the teacher's pure heart and intellect; PURITY—not merely the cleanliness of the seeker's physical *structure*, but also of his dress and other belongings and of the *environments* in which he is living. It comprehends the inner *purity of thoughts* and emotions, intentions and motives, passions and urges; STEADFASTNESS—consistency of purpose and *concentration* of all efforts towards achieving the cultural and the spiritual goal striven for; SELF-CONTROL—self-restraint practised at all the personality-layers, both collectively and severally in their contacts with the world outside.

> * Indifference to the objects of the senses, and also absence of egoism, perception of (or reflection on) evil and pain in birth, old age, sickness and death ..

INDIFFERENCE TO SENSE-OBJECTS: This does not mean running away from the objects of the world. Living in the midst of these objects, to switch off our mental pre-occupations with them; living amidst the objects detachedly and not shackling ourselves with them in utter slavery—this is what is meant here by the term *Vairagya*. To run away from the objects and to indulge in them mentally amount to suppression, and such a suppressed individual is labelled as a hypocrite (*Mithyachara*) by Lord Krishna Himself.

ABANDONMENT OF THE THOUGHT OF "I": The individuality-sense comes only when we identify ourselves with the equipments and their perceptions. To reduce this delusory misconception of ourselves is an essential pre-requisite for asserting and living our own Divine nature. This is equivalent to the weeding that must precede planting in any field of cultivation.

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* इन्द्रियार्थेषु वैराग्यमनहंकार एव च।
जन्ममृत्युजराव्याधिदुःखदोषानुदर्शनम्॥

(Ge. Ch. XIII-9)

PERCEPTION OF THE EVIL AND THE PAIN: To feel discontented with a situation can goad us to discover a new state of existence. Whether it be a nation, a community or a society, as long as they the members are not aware of the fact that their present condition is despicable and tragic, they will adapt themselves to living in that condition unconscious of their sorrows. Every politician or social worker first makes the people understand their present state of degradation and destitution. Only when such realization comes to them, they are ready, with all enthusiasm, to seek fresh fields of greater joys and fuller life.

The same technique is applicable in the cultural field also. Unless a seeker becomes fully conscious of the inward personality shackles in himself, he will live on in his own ditch of sorrows never striving to get out of it. Both the human mind and the body have a tremendous amount of adaptability. They can adapt themselves to any condition and even come to enjoy them.

Unless a seeker is constantly conscious of the evil and the pain in his present state of existence, he cannot discover the necessary spiritual urge, intellectual dynamism, emotional enthusiasm and the physical courage to seek, to fight for, to win and to possess the divine fields of perfection. Every physical body in the world goes through the modifications such as birth, sickness, old age and death. Each one of these is an inlet for fresh sources of sorrow. Birth, growth, decay, disease and death are the tragic experiences of all living equipments. In all the metamorphoses, to recognize pain constantly is to feel an impatience with it. This sense of revolt against pain is the fuel that drives the seekers faster and faster to the peaks of perfection.

*** Non-attachment, non-identification of self with son, wife, home and the rest, and constant even-mindedness on the attainment of the desirable and the undesirable........**

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* असक्तिरनभिष्वङ्गः पुत्रदारगृहादिषु ।
नित्यं च समचित्तत्वमिष्टानिष्टोपपत्तिषु ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIII -10)

NON-ATTACHMENT : The sticking on of the mind to the various objects of the world with extreme liking for them, is called attachment. It is the mental contact with the world outside that agitates the mind. It dances along to the tune of death towards which the finite objects of the world most often dance. Fire in itslef cannot burn, but a child gets its fingers burnt ; it is not because of the fire but because its fingers propelled by a force called desire, come in actual contact with the fire. Mental contacts with the world outside provide the breeding centres for all our sorrows in life. The world outside by itself can give us neither an experience of joy nor that of sorrow. Therefore, keeping the mind away from all attachments assure a peaceful life.

ABSENCE OF EXCESSIVE LOVE FOR CHILD, WIFE, HOME AND THE LIKE : Excessive love or affection is an intense form of attachment to another. It consists in our total identification with the object of our affection. The lover loses his personal identity in his identification with the beloved to such an extent that he feels happy or sorrowful when his object of attachment is happy or sorrowful. Such an intimate relationship is generally met with in the attachment of a mother to its child.

If we can build a wall of discrimination around our inner personality and keep such disturbances away from us, then we can discover the equipoise in ourselves, without which no progress or growth is ever possible. With a little practice, the evenness of the mind can be maintained unbroken in all situations of life, desirable as well as undesirable. A human mind, relieved from its preoccupations with its own present attachments and affections, unintelligent though they be, will discover in itslef a tremendous amount of surplus energy conserved, which might flow into dangerous channels unless rightly directed.

The right channelising of this newly discovered energy is indicated in the following stanza :

*** By having an unswerving devotion unto Me, the Yoga, of non-separation, by resorting to solitary places**

and by developing a distaste for the society of men…

Compelled by the understanding of the nature of all men of action and perhaps forced by the very spirit of the practical reformer in the *Yogeswara*, the Divine Song, as it is given has become the most practical text-book on Self-discovery. The moment the *Geetacharya* advises his disciple to develop any given mental or intellectual beauty, he always suggests a practical method by which this can actually be accomplished.

If the seeker tries to develop in himself the virtues described in the previous three stanzas, not only in his inward life but also in all his contacts with the world around him, it is certain that he, an ordinary man of the world, will thereby conserve in himself lot of energy. This stanza describes the right application of this conserved energy in proper channels so as to profit thereby and gain a better Self-unfoldment.

UNFLINCHING DEVOTION TO ME: Concentration is the focussing of the mind upon a particular point to the exclusion of all mental excitements and agitations. The steadiness in contemplation may be destroyed by causes arising at two different points—either in the individual's own mind or in the object contemplated, upon. Unless both are steady, concentration will get unsteady, because the point-of-concentration becomes ever-changing. Therefore it is said that unflinching devotion towards Me (the Self), is one of the conditions necessary for steady progress and growth in *Yoga*.

THE YOGA OF NON-SEPARATION: Undivided attention and enthusiasm in the mind of the devotee is another condition that will accomplish better concentration. Otherwise the mind may revolt against its own devoted self-application and will, either partially or wholly, wander away into its own delusory enchantments. A certain amount of steadiness of purpose is to be main-

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* मयि चानन्ययोगेन भक्तिरव्यभिचारिणी ।
विविक्तदेशसेवित्वमरतिर्जनसंसदि ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIII–11)

tained by the mind. Wild imaginations and futile day-dreaming are the pre-occupations of only a disintegrated mind.

The typical expression used here by Sri Krishna to indicate the object and despicable vacillations of the human mind at the seat of *Yoga* clearly shows the force with which he wants to condemn such vacillations. He says that the mind should be "unprostituting" with its point-of-contemplation. Prostitution denotes an attitude of selling away one's own capabilities and beauties for the sake of some paltry profit. A mind wedded to the Lord is a mind at faithful contemplation. The warning "not to prostitute" is indeed very powerful in expressing that the point-of-concentration should not be at a crowd of deities or a host of ideas, but must faithfully serve some chosen single ideal.

Similarly, the other powerful expression used in the stanza is "the *Yoga* of non-otherness" (*Ananya-Yoga*). Inspired as He is, the *Yogeswara* coins a new and poweful phrase on the spur of the moment to bring a new fire into his re-interpretation of the ancient Hindu way of life and the technique of self-culture.

Such an integrated life of stable mind, and steady contemplation upon a firm ideal is impossible, unless the practitioner works in a conducive environment. This is indicated in the two indirect advices (*a*) *To resort to solitary places and* (*b*) *To develop a distaste for the crowded social life.* The more integrated the personality grows and the more maddening becomes its enthusiasm for the quest of that which is dear to its heart, the more it automatically lives alone in itself away from the noisy crowd. This is true of every thinker—be he a poet, be he a scientific research-scholar or be he a man with an acute problem.

Whenever the mind is fascinated by an enchanting ideal, it loses all its contact with other preoccupations and becomes wedded faithfully to its own all-absorbing theme of interest. Thereafter just as a poet lives in his own world and just as the scientist is a solitary man even in the market place so the devotee also enters a cave of his own experiences and walks alone in the world— hates other thoughts entering his mind, and so lives alone

self. These two terms should not be misunderstood as physical escapism into a tomb-like solitude, or as a physical aversion to the society of men.

in the concluding stanza of this narrative, explaining the various essential qualifications in a seeker, the Lord adds to the aforesaid list of eighteen qualifications, two more items, viz., " constancy in self-knowledge " and " perception of the end and True Knowledge ".

> * **Constancy in Self-knowledge, perception of the end of True knowledge this is declared to be " knowledge ", and what is opposed to it is " ignorance ".**

CONSTANCY IN SELF KNOWLEDGE : The knowl edge of the Self is to be lived and not merely learnt. If the self is one everywhere and the Self alone is Real, the seeker should try to live as the Self at all level of his personality. The constancy of living the " spiritual knowledge " at all levels of one's contacts with the world outside, is one of the unaviodable practices, a seeker should always keep up.

PERCEPTION OF THE END OF TRUE KNOWLEDGE : To remember constantly the goal of our endeavour is to add more enthusiasm to our activities. Sincerity of purpose in, and undying devotion to, any endeavour can be had only if the seeker is thrilled by the vision of the goal that he has to reach. Thus the " end " should be kept in view. Liberation (*Moksha*) from all our imperfections and limitations is the " end " striven for by all spiritual seekers, hence these attributes described so far are decalred to be " knowledge " because they are conducive to the final Realization of the Self.

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* अध्यात्मज्ञाननित्यत्वं तत्त्वज्ञानार्थदर्शनम् ।
एतज्ज्ञानमिति प्रोक्तमज्ञानं यदतोऽन्यथा ॥

(Ge. Ch. XIII-12)

18

Spirituality and Culture

When a set of people live for a long period of time, in a particular geographical, climatic and environmental condition, respecting philosophical values and virtues of life, there emenates a fragrance which is called their culture. The quality of such a culture depends upon the type of values followed. The first three aspects are common to different countries, and they are the same within limits, just as the head, the trunk and the limbs are common to all human beings although the size, weight, colour and shape differ from one to the other. The difference in culture therefore, lies in the values and virtues of life entertained by the people.

In the western countries the land was rugged and hard because of severe climatic conditions and constant snowfall ; consequently the people became hardy. They had to train themselves to fight the unrelenting Nature and procure from her whatever was required for their self-preservation. Conquest of Nature thus became a fundamental trait in the character of people in the West. In sharp contrast the East provided land with plenty and prosperity. With the slightest effort the land yielded abundance of flowers, fruits and vegetation ; rivers were ever full and spring time flourished for many months in a year. In such a harmonious

expression of life, everywhere people followed Nature and quite naturally developed a culture based on " serving and giving " instead of " fighting and procuring ". Thus a culture emanating peace, tranquillity and love developed in this country, whereas materialism took roots in the West and the idea of conquest was established.

Even in our day-to-day experiences in life, we can clearly observe how external environments and happenings exercise initially their distinct influence on the development of our culture. A poor boy, living in a rugged atmosphere of slums, seems to develop a tendency to protest and fight, while another, born of opulence and security, is generally more refined and cultured. This can be observed particularly in a bus-queue where the latter waits and takes his turn, while the former often protests, rushes and forces himself in.

The values respected by the people are, in the beginning, ordered by the external exigencies of life. Thus, in the first age of civilization, geographical and climatic conditions and environments influenced the people and determined their values of life. Once such values are determined and culture is set, the external environment will have little influence over the culture thus established.

Civilization flourishes with the promotion of culture, but when the cultural values deteriorate, the civilization of a society breaks down as we have known from the fall of Egyptian, Greek and Roman Civilizations. The great religious Masters of this country, using their own ingenious efforts have time and again revived the philosophical and religious values for which this country stood and thereby arrested the deterioration of our culture. When culture deteriorates, there is an increase in barbarity and immorality in the country, and its philosophy is mis-interpreted leading to confusion and chaos among its people. This in short, is more or less the sad condition of the present world. The need of the hour is to arrest forthwith the deterioration by reviving the great philosophical and religious values of life.

In no other literature in the world have these values been so beautifully and exhaustively dealt with as in the sacred books

of our country. In this context we may note the following advice given to the students by the *Rishi* of the *Taittiriya Upanishad* : ,

* The practice of what is right and proper is fixed by the scriptural texts, is to be followed along with reading the texts oneself and propagating the truths of the same. ("Truth" ; this means that practising in life what is understood to be right and proper, is to be pursued along with regular studies and preaching). Penance, study and preaching ; control of the senses, study and preaching ; tranquillity study and preaching; the "maintenance of fire", study and preaching ; offering to fires in fire-sacrifice, study and preathing of the *Vedas* ; serving the guests, study and preaching; the performance of duties towards children, study and teaching of *Vedas* : procreation, study and preaching, propagation of the race, study and preaching ;— all these are things to be practised sincerely.

* * Satyavachas, son of Rathitara, holds that *truth* alone is to be strictly practised. Thapanitya, son of Paurusishti, declares that *penance* alone is to be practised. Naka, son of Mudgala, holds the view that the study and preaching of the *Vedas* only are to be practised ; that verily is penance; aye, that is penance.

This portion of the *Upanishad* represents the last concluding

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* ऋतं च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च। सत्यं च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च।
तपश्च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च। दमश्च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च।
शमश्च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च। अग्नयश्च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च।
अग्निहोत्रं च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च। अतिथयश्च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने
च। मानुषं च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च। प्रजा च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च।
प्रजनश्च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च। प्रजातिश्च स्वाध्यायप्रवचने च।

** सत्यमिति सत्यवचा राथितरः। तप इति तपोनित्यः
पौरुशिष्टिः। स्वाध्यायप्रवचने एवेति नाको मौद्गल्यः।
तद्धि तपस्तद्धि तपः॥

(Tai. Up., *Ch. I, Sec.-9*)

lectually comprehended during the studies (*Satyam*), (*c*) spirit of self-sacrifice and self-denial (*Tapas*), (*d*) control of the senses (*Dama*), (*e*) tranquillity of the mind (*Shama*), (*f*) maintenance of a charitable and ready kitchen at home in the *Seva* of all deserving hungry fellow-beings (*Agni*), (*g*) practice of concentration and ritualism through Fire-worship as was in vogue in the society of those days (*Sacred fires*), (*h*) doing one's duty towards humanity, towards children, towards grand-children and towards society.

At the end of the section, three great masters have been quoted who had in the past declared the most important of the above. The necessary quality to be cultivated according to each is either *Satyam* or *Tapas* or study of the *Shastras* and its efficient spread in the society (*Swadyaya-Pravachanam*).

In short, the section reads as though it is a manifesto upon the Hindu way of living in which every Hindu is charged to live true to his or her own intellectual convictions (*Satyam*), in a spirit of self-denial (*Tapas*), attend to the study of the sacred texts (*Swadyaya*) and the spread of the culture among the peoples of the world (*Pravachanam*), not merely by preaching but by living the very same virtues and values of this sacred culture in his or her own private life. Therefore, continuing the "convocation address" the teacher says :

> *** Having taught the *Vedas*, the preceptor enjoins the pupil : "Speak the truth, do your duty, never swerve from the study of the *Vedas*, do not cut off the line of descendants in your family, after giving the perceptor the *Guru Dakshina*. Never deviate from truth, never fail in your duty, never overlook your own welfare, never neglect your prosperity, never neglect the study and the propagation of the *Vedas*."**

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* वेदमनूच्याचार्योऽन्तेवासिनमनुशास्ति। सत्यं वद।
धर्मं चर। स्वाध्यायान्मा प्रमदः। आचार्याय प्रियं
धनमाहृत्य प्रजातन्तुं मा व्यवच्छेत्सीः। सत्यान्न
प्रमदितव्यम्। धर्मान्न प्रमदितव्य्। कुशलान्न प्रमदितव्यं।
भूत्यै न प्रमदितव्य्। स्वाध्यायप्रवचनाभ्यां न प्रमदितव्यम्॥
(Tai. Up. Ch. I, Sec-11)

After the studies, before the students are let out to their destinies in their independent individual life as a being, the teacher gives his exhortation which comprises self, we may say, "*Vedanta in practice*". The entire weal knowledge gained by the *Rishis* in their experiments wit world-of-objects, the world-of-thoughts and the world-of has been here brought from the temples and libraries, to home and the fields ! The modern half-educated youth are ter to cry down *Vedanta* as an impracticable theory ; this can b sad moaning of only the one who has not read this portion - crystallized essence of Hinduism — with sufficient poise peaceful reflection.

In this exhortation the first wave of thoughts comp the *Guru's* advice to the students about their relationship society. *Sathyam Vada* "Speak the truth": Truthfu consists mainly in uttering a thought as it is actually perce without hypocrisy or any vulgar motive to do injury to ot Ordinarily, a liar is he who has not the moral courage to ex what he sincerely feels. This disparity between thought and w creates in his mind a habit to entertain "Self-cancellat of thoughts. This impoverishes the individual's mental stre will power, and determined dynamism. Such an exhau mental character is too weak thereafter to make any pro in life's pilgrimage.

In fact, truthfulness in its essential meaning, is not m giving expression to one's honest feelings truely and effecti but in its deeper imports, it is the attunement of the m thoughts with one's own intellectual convictions. *Ved* being the science of living unless we are ready to disci and marshal our thought-forces to the unquestioning au rity of our own reason chastened with knowledge, in the ens chaos within, we cannot grow to realize the full unfoldi of our true and divine nature.

Having developed this quality of Truthfulness w should one apply it ? As if anticipating such a doubt in student the teacher says : *Dharmam Chara*. *Dha* is a sanskrit word which has no corresponding word in Eng

Somebody in haste translated it as "righteousness"; but this is too meagre a word to carry the load of meaning contained in the word *Dharma*. All those fundamental values of life which are universally good at all places and at all times and which form the rock-bottom foundations of all efforts at moral re-armament and all edifices of ethical perfection, which constitute the corner-stones for all temples, churches, mosques, synagogues and gurudwaras and which are the eternal duties of every man who wants to live upto the full dignity of the human and strive consistently to grow into his full stature as a Godman in this very life, are included in the word *Dharma*. In this ampler meaning we may for our convenience, but not for a full satisfaction, translate *Dharma* as *duty*.

Hinduism is built upon duties and responsibilities and not on rights. The European way of thought has moulded itself upon the "principles of rights", and they the Europeans have been growing through arrows and boomerangs and bullets and shells, to reach the present, when they are threatening one another with Atomic weapons and secret instruments of mutual slaughter, to demand and maintain the rights of each against the rights of the others. They are *demanding* rights; rights are to be taken; to be acquired; to be preserved. A civilization that is based upon "rights" must necessarily come to clamour and fight; and the instincts of acquiring and hoarding, keeping and maintaining develop in such a society, and will ultimately upset peace.

On the other hand, the glorious *Sanatana Dharma* of the Hindu recognizes his right "to do his duties" as the fundamental privilege in life. When it is a *duty* to be performed, a generation that understands it, will get trained to demand of life only ample chances to fulfil the duty. Duty therefore develops the spirit of giving or the urge to be charitable and not the lust to hoard or the anxiety to keep.

The growing buds of the generation, as they were leaving the teacher's presence, were advised to keep to the glorious principle of fulfilling their duties towards the society, towards their relations and also towards themselves. The duty consci-

ousness of the teachers themselves was such that the fee (*Guru Dakshina*) was not demanded of the students even when they were leaving the institution after their education. The *Gurukula* system seemed not to justify itself to demand fees simply because the *Gurus* had educated them. The system was thorough and they were so confident of the results that they were cocksure that they would be receiving the payment right from the first independent income of the individual !

As soon as the student reached home, he plunged into work and the early savings that he could make entirely went towards the *Guru Dakshina*. And none among them could forget their own days of *Gurukula* activities and the fact that during their days the old students did maintain the *Rishi*-universities. Thus the youths of every generation continued subscribing towards the *Gurukula*-funds almost year after year and also during the various stages of their life

After the payment of the fees, the student was advised to enter into a householder's life by marrying a suitable bride ; he was further advised that he should live with her enjoying a perfectly controlled indulgence. It was one of the duties of a Hindu householder that he should not misunderstand his early education, with its over-emphasis on *Brahmacharya*, and should not continue sex-control even in his householder's life, because such a self-control in that young age may amount to sex-suppression in the majority of cases. He is therefore advised that he should not break the line of descendants.

The sequence of thoughts as expressed here, " After giving the preceptor his fees, do not cut off the thread of progeny ", implies the healthy suggestion for us as to how best we should plan our life. After education, first of all, be economically independent, learn a trade, create a market, assure a comfortable income, and then as the next duty in life, marry and maintain the line of descendants in the family — so says the scripture.

This is followed by a series of warnings not to swerve from truthfulness, duty, personal welfare and prosperity. If the Hindus had correctly understood this portion and pursued this

**those virtuous actions which are irreproachable—
and not others.**

At the conclusion of this thought-wave, the declaration of the teacher gains for itself a roar of sincerity almost unequalled in any other religious literature in the world, both in its modesty and in its selfless dedication to Truth. Philosophy being a subjective science and since its blessing can be gained by us only by actually living it, apart from its logic and reason, the theory must have the dynamism of the teacher with it to inspire the students at all times. If this reverence and respect for the teacher be not there, the moment suspicion and doubt creep into our minds regarding the purity and sincerity of the teacher, the philosophy that is declared becomes immediately impotent in our hearts. Therefore the teacher says, "*follow only the irreproachable qualities in us*".

This does not mean that the teacher is full of vices, but the *Rishi* is extra careful to avoid all possibilities of any misjudgement. Even when an individual has no weakness, it is possible that an observer may project his own mental evaluations and come to criticise and condemn the other. As a remedy to all such mental drawbacks, the teacher, accepting this natural weakness in man, exhorts him to follow only those irreproachable qualities, habits and conducts noticed in the teacher. "*Not others*" means that if there be any unhealthy trait and even though the teacher might be practising it, on no score should it be copied and followed by a true student of this culture.

This portion clearly shows the attitude which the teahers maintained in the presence of the students. They did not even for a moment pose themselves either as superhuman, or as colossus of purity, strength or divinity. They behaved among the students as though they were mortals with all possible weaknesses which a mortal is heir to.

** यान्यवद्यानि कर्माणि। तानि सेवितव्यानि। नोइतराणि।
यान्यस्माकं सुचरितानि। तानि त्वयोपास्यानि। नोइतराणि।
(Tai. Up., Ch. I, Sec.-11)



ful eye by the *Rishis* of old. They advised their students to follow a healthier and more tolerant attitude. Therefore :

> *** You must not even breathe a word when those, who are more distinguished than you, are in discussion on spiritual matters (or, you must offer seat to superiors and worship them with acts of reverence and love).**

The arrangement of words here — *Tvayasanena prashavasitavyam* — is a masterly manipulation of sounds in such a way that in themselves they can be made to mean two ideas which are both instructions to the students. *Tvaya* + *Asanena* + *Prashavasitavyam* is one way of dissolving the words, in which case it means that "the master should be entertained with a seat and other things provided by you".

The same can be dissolved as *Tvaya* + *Asane* + *Na* + *Prashavasitavyam*, in which case it will mean, "not even a word should be breathed out by you when they are seated in their assembly for discussion". In the former case it is an advice on how you should receive and entertain with respect and devotion all teachers ; and in the latter case it is a prescription of the code of behaviour that one should observe in an assembly of teachers who are discussing philosophical matters among themselves. The idea is that you must be all ears and eyes when the wise talk, and not be full of noise and tongue. When such teachers discuss, there are plenty of ideas which one must try to absorb and later on to be discussed upon and assimilated properly. If one were to start discussion and arguments in the very begining, one is apt to lose oneself in a morass of words and get oneself perhaps choked and lost in it.

Continuing the address to the students the *Rishi* adds :

> **** Gifts should be given with faith ; they should never be given without faith ; they should be given in plenty, with modesty and with sympathy.**

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* ये के चास्मच्छ्रेयाँसो ब्राह्मणाः। तेषां त्वयाऽऽसनेन प्रशवसितव्यम् ।

(Tai. Up., Ch. I, Sec-11)

As we have noticed earlier, the Hindu culture is essentially based upon the sacrifice implied in *duty* and not upon acquisition which is implied in *rights.* The very structure in Hinduism recognizes the householder's existence only as a necessary training in curbing his animalism and purifying the greater heights of spiritualism. Cultural perfection was the goal. Every breath in the individual, every activity in his life, and every thought in him, was marshalled and disciplined to bring out the symphony of the perfect Hindu culture. As such the householder was trained to live a life of earning and spending, mating and breeding, building and keeping, only as a field of activity for him to train himself in the values of love, kindness, service and charity. Ultimately the individual was valued upon the spirit of sacrifice he could show towards the finite, when the call of the Infinite reached him to smother his bosom.

Naturally therefore, the teacher has to give some instruction as to how charity can best be practised. In the name of charity many a thing is ordinarily done in society, which destroys both the giver and recipient ; the giver gains in his vanity, while the recipient becomes an irredeemable idler and a moral wreck. In order to avoid such a social suicide the master had to instruct the students on the " Laws of giving ", lest it should kill the soul of this consummate social law.

GIFTS SHOULD BE GIVEN WITH FAITH : Faith is not what we generally understand it to mean. In society faith is generally understood as some idea to be swallowed without questioning, without enquiry. To be under the intellectual tyranny of an individual or a class, is not faith according to *Vedanta.* This has been made clear in *Vivekachudamani* by Sri Sankaracharya. *Acharya* Sankara says that to judge and understand rightly the full import of the advice of teachers and the depth of the declarations in the sacred text-books and thereafter, to struggle in our thoughts and activities constantly to attune ourselves to these intellectual judgements, is called faith.

** श्रद्धया देयम्। अश्रद्धयादेयम्। श्रिया देयम्। ह्रिया देयम्।
भिया देयम्। संविदा देयम्।

(Tai. Up., Ch. I, Sec–11)

Therefore, charity is acceptable only when it toes the line with our own independent intellectual beliefs and convictions. Unless we are convinced of the nobility and unless we have come to a correct and independent judgement upon the worthiness of the cause, charity should not be practised. There is a school of intellectual idlers who believe that our chariy must be as open and as free as the fruit trees in an orchard that give their fruits to all without questioning.

This is not acceptable to the Science of *Vedanta* which is not trying to cultivate fruit trees. Its aim is to cultivate the thinking animal called "man". Therefore, the *Rishi* pointedly condemns the opposite idea by the positive declaration "*gifts should not be given without faith*". Every benefactor has the right, nay, has the duty to enquire into the *bonafides* of the cause which he is trying to patronize.

Again, a miserly giving will not benefit either the giver or the receiver, and therefore it is said that having come to judge a cause to be deserving give it your entire patronage ; "give in plenty ; with both hands give !"

This very charity can bring into us feelings of egoism and vanity, and these are being avoided by instructing us to give with modesty. There are yet others who may have the intellectual vision to judge the cause they are patronizing, the large-heartedness to give in plenty, with all modesty that has been required of them and yet, they may not have the necessay element of love in themselves to feel a deep sympathy with the cause which they happen to patronize The *Rishi* is here advising that we should not on any score ignore this most essential factor in all charities. To give without sympathy is to build a temple without the idol and is as futile as to paint a picture with black ink on a blackboard !

Sympathy generates love in us, aud unless this love-element comes to predominate in us, compelling us to seek an identity with the cause, we will not be spiritually evolving along the path of charity. Charity constricts the hearts and obstructs the human growth, if it is not honeyed with the spirit of love and

the joy of identification.

Hence we are warned against all charity without sympathy with the cause or the occasion. To throw the smallest coin to a *helpless* beggar and to *make him struggle hard* in *picking* it up from the wayside dirt with his half-eaten leprous fingers is no charity at all, however thick the donor may wear his caste-mark on his narrow forehead ! !

Coming to the end of "convocation address" given to the students, the *Rishi* says :

> *Now if there should arise any doubt regarding your acts or any uncertainty in respect of your conduct in life, you should act in those matters exactly as those *Brahmanas* there, who are thoughtful, religious, not set on by others, not cruel and are devoted to *Dharma*.
>
> **And now with regard to those who are falsely accused of some crime, you should conduct yourselves exactly in the same manner as do the *Brahmanas* there, who are thoughtful, religious, not set on by others, not cruel and are devoted to *Dharma*.

In the thick of life's battle, there may arise situations in which there may be a doubt in your mind as to what the *ideal* way to live is. In all such cases the Hindu youngster is advised to follow other elderly members of the society who are the accredited champions of our culture.

These *cultural perfections should not be in themselves the* qualification necessary to make a man perfect enough *to be*

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* अथ यदि ते कर्मविचिकित्सा वा वृत्तविचिकित्सा वा स्यात्।
ये तत्र ब्राह्मणाः सम्मर्शिनः। युक्ता अयुक्ताः। अलूक्षा
धर्मकामाः स्युः। यथा ते तत्र वर्तेरन्। तथा तत्र वर्तेथाः।

** अथाभ्याख्यातेषु। ये तत्र ब्राह्मणाः सम्मर्शिनः युक्ता अयुक्ताः।
अलूक्षा धर्मकामाः स्युः। यथा ते तत्र वर्तेरन्। तथा तत्र [illegible]।

(Tai. Up. [illegible]

followed by others. He must be thoughtful: that means that he must be one who is not blindly following the *Shastras*, but is one who is capable of independent thinking and of correct judgement. He must not be one who is merely secular in his concept of things, but must be one who should have respect and reverence for the sanctity of the sacred,–a true *Brahmin*.

A true *Brahmin* is one who is not only a man of independent judgement and truly religious, but also a man with full freedom to express his ideas. This is exactly the quality absent in many of the presnt-day *Brahmins* of the world. The European philosophers and the Indian *Pundits*, including the presidents of the *mutts* find themselves in a pitiable position, compelled to dilute their opinion to court the attitudes or even the prejudices of their patrons ! !

Such *Acharyas* are not considred as the ideal ones to be followed. An ideal *Brahmin* should be one who is not set on by others. He must not be cruel. He must be a self-dedicated champion of the greater values of life as expained in the immortal scriptures of the Hindus. Such men of dedicated life firmly established in their ideas and stoutly independent are the true sons of the Hindu culture, and you have been asked to follow them whenever there is a doubt regarding either your action or your conduct.

KARMAVICHIKITSA : Regarding ritualism there are some fundamental doubts regarding the various rules, since we meet with contradictory statements in the text-books. Some branches believe that the fire-worship should be made *before* sunrise. Others insist that it should be *after* sunrise. Regarding the *Devatas* also there are doubts as to whether they are masculine or feminine, since both genders are found to have been used in some cases in the *Puranas*. In all such cases the student has been asked to follow what the ideal local *Brahmin* follows.

VRITAVICHIKITSA : These represent certain doubts regarding man's conduct : for example, in a country like India which incorporates, in its vast embrace a variety of geographical conditions, habits and customs, flora and fauna, we

find even contrary and opposite conducts are recognized as ethical and moral in different parts of the country. In Kerala under the matriarchal system, uncle's daughter can be married by the nephew, while in other parts of India it is tabooed. In one place the bridegroom is purchased with a dowry for the sad privilege of accepting his daughter as wife, while in the Himalayan villages a girl is purchased as cattle for agricultural purposes ! In all other provinces of India if one husband for a woman is considered as normal, among the Pathans it is a code of morality that three or four brothers can together co-operatively maintain a single wife. In such circumstances it is possible that the student comes to doubt as to what the right conduct is ; in all such matters he is directed to follow the eminent men of culture in the community.

> * This is the command. This is the teaching. This is the secret of the *Vedas*. This is the commandment. This should be observed. Verily, having understood this fully, one must act in the way taught above, continuously till the last — and not otherwise.

With this wave of thought the Master is concluding his discourse. When we follow merely the word-meaning, we are apt *to misjudge these words as a vain repetition of similar words* already used, almost conveying the same sense. But on a closer analysis we can discover that in the dramatic layout of the *Upanishads*, as a conversation between the teacher and the taught, these words declare the character of the student as well as the temperament of the teacher.

Concluding his exhortation the teacher declares that "*this* is the command" (*Adesha*). In the next sentence he amends it by a much more mild term as "This is the advice" (*Upadesa*). In the dramatic situation here it should be amply clear to any reader what exactly must have made the teacher mend his words. As soon as he declared that this is the "command", in spite of

* एष आदेशः। एष उपदेशः। एष वेदोपनिषत्।
एतदनुशासनम्। एवमुपासितव्यम्। एवमुचैतदुपास्यम्॥
(Tai. Up., Ch. I. Sec-11)

their reverence to the *Guru*, the Hindu students—temperamentally not very willing to accept a command on ethical and moral rules from anybody, even if it be from their own *Guru*, unless he pauses to explain, and, make them understand the logic of it—seemed to have expressed a revolt in their looks. This attitude of their intellectual dis-satisfaction might have expressed itself in the sparkling eyes of the young students and so the *Guru* dilutes his emphasis by his amendment.

Again, the discriminative intellects of the *Vedic generation* even in their youthful days were audacious enough to question the teachers until they got a complete satisfaction, and the teachers also never misunderstood their students at this behaviour. They on the other hand always expected and encouraged in their students all intellectual honesty and freedom. Seeing this healthy sign of revolt against an individual's intellectual dictatorship, especially in moral and ethical values, the teacher again appealed to them to accept what he said, since his arguements were in no sense a mere intellectual hypothesis of his own independent intellectual calculations but they were, he declared, the declartions of the *Veda* (*Vedopanishad*).

Those who understand and will enter into the spirit of the *Veda*, understand that the declaration of the *Vedas* are no subject matter for doubt, since they are all declarations of the saints and sages who report their own transcendental experiences rather than enunciate with their finite and limited intellects.

Once the teacher remembered that what he had declared was the *cream* of Hinduism, as declared by the endless hierarchy of divine masters, he gained a self-confidence, as it were, in himself and exploded to say that this is the Commandment (*Anushasanam*) of the Lord, the very Creator of Life.

The above passages starting with "*Sathyam Vada*" consisting of 25 items and divisible into 6 waves of thoughts, *constitute* the sacred Commandments in Hinduism. The waves of thoughts as indicated in this section are (1) advice regarding the individual himself, (2) his relationship with others, (3) his right action in the world, (4) his attitude towards the eminent

men of culture, (5) the laws of charity and (6) his duty to follow the eminent living men of his own times.

In the seventh wave of thoughts the teacher concludes saying that these Commandments are to be followed diligently by every intelligent seeker who lives a life for a higher cultural purpose, besides his wordly ambitions and secular activities. In short, over the shoulders of the students, as it were, the *Rishi* is addressing the entire Hindu community to follow these Commandments and bring about the perfect cultural and spiritual unfoldment in themselves and in the society.